

DOCUMENTARY

NEWS LETTER

AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 1967

ONE DOLLAR

IN THE FOCUS: Welcome to Scotland: Interviewing Britain's Film
Directors



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DOCUMENTARY NEWS LETTER

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AUGUST-SEPTEMBER 1947 VOL 6 NO 58 PUBLISHED BY FILM CENTRE 34 SOHO SQUARE LONDON W1

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BALANCE SHEET

WITH a crucial year more than half spent, it is desirable to look around us and to examine the present characteristics of the documentary scene.

Undoubtedly the brightest part of the picture is provided by documentary's international efforts. Both in UNESCO and UNO there is a consciousness of what the documentary film can do and an anxiety to give it its chance. Documentary relations with these two bodies are close and cordial. The plans being made lack nothing in ambition: only a sense of urgency and of the need for speed sometimes seems to be missing. Then there has been the informal meeting at which was born the World Union of Documentary. Perhaps there has been no more stirring moment in the whole history of documentary than this assembling around a table in a Brussels hotel of documentary representatives and observers from ten countries, ranging from Poland to Australia, workers from all over the world sharing the common language of documentary purpose.

In Britain the picture is less encouraging. The Central Office of Information move slowly and with confusion of purpose towards an inadequate goal. It is allowing the vision of democracy's promised land to disappear in a sunset of red tape. In the educational film field, inter-departmental jealousies and political reaction appear to obstruct the development of official plans.

Also it is sadly clear in Britain that the marked influence which documentary films were having in the last years of the war upon the feature films is now most definitely on the wane. Indeed, to some not unfriendly observers, it appears that the artistic and truly creative hey-day of the Rank empire is already passing and that *The Way Ahead* has led only to *The Blue Lagoon*. All is not yet lost, but it appears probable that, if producers wish to counter the present signs of defeatism, of escape into sadistic crime or puerile romance, then they can do it best by a concentration upon the kind of documentary techniques that Louis de Rochemont is so brilliantly developing in the United States and Rossellini in Italy in their films *Boomerang* and *Open City*.

But perhaps the most alarming sign of the times is the widespread adverse comment heard during the recent Brussels Film Festival upon the quality of the British documentary entries. All planning, all long-term blue-printing is a waste of time unless it can

be assumed that films of adequate quality will be obtained to fulfil the plan. And this assumption we feel is one which in the past has been too easily made. In Britain today documentary films are made too slowly and when they come they are often mediocre. Here is a challenge which must be met and met quickly. In our efforts to secure documentary's true place in the world today, let us make quite sure that documentary remains fit to occupy it.

At its inaugural meeting the World Union of Documentary adopted an impressive resolution calculated to make clear the determination of documentary workers everywhere to ally themselves with progressive social forces. Such a resolution must be implemented not with words and with speeches but with films. And in planning films to assist the forward march of the world's peoples, it is essential that the functions of documentary should be interpreted in the broadest possible terms. It is easy at this critical time to become impatient with all work which does not appear directly to promote social change. It is easy to look back to an awe-inspiring but quite imaginary documentary past when all energy was concentrated upon films attacking the problems of malnutrition, slum housing, and unemployment. The plain fact is that memory has telescoped documentary history and that between 1930 and 1939 the films of direct sociological purpose were fewer and further between than they are today.

The time may well come when it will be held that documentary's most important contribution to social progress has been in re-interpreting and integrating academic knowledge in the light of the methods and purposes of social organization. The documentary medium is a political instrument only in so far as all true education is political. The documentary worker who can feel passionately only about films which make direct political party propaganda is most likely a poor or a jaded film-maker. If the honest political opportunities (that is the educational opportunities) are to be grasped, then they will be grasped by film-makers who feel as passionately about the pure exposition in the civic interest of some technological problem as they do about an election result. For documentary is a matter of dramatic interpretation and exposition operating on a plane above the level of party politics. Or to sum up the position another way: the most effective propagandist is in the long run the educationalist who is conscious of social needs.

WELCOME TO SCOTLAND

A THOUSAND years hence, some zealot may sit down and write, with all the simplifications that perspective gives, a Book of the Genesis of the documentary film movement.

Perhaps he will be—as that earlier zealot was—an historian of such clear perception, that he will be able to distil the whole revolutionary proceedings into seven creative days. Certainly he will be amazed by the revelation that so many of these days must be sited not in Soho Square but in Scotland.

To carry this metaphor too far risks much besides blasphemy, but at least it is time to remind the South how much has been pioneered in the North.

John Grierson himself—that goes without saying. *Drifters* was made in England? But who but a Scot would have shot his first film about the herring?

Not the facts themselves, but the art with which they were presented was the secret of the early success of documentary. The magazine which lifted public appreciation of film on to the level of high art, and set the highbrows scurrying to see the latest EMB or GPO product, was the *Cinema Quarterly*, edited and published in Scotland.

Statistically, Scotland is satisfied, if she provides one item of any kind to every ten from England. There are 44 million people in England, only 4½ million in Scotland. But start counting film technicians, particularly documentary film technicians.

Scotland was the first nation boldly to present itself on the screen in a planned series of films for all the world to see. The seven Films of Scotland—about the people, economics, fisheries, sport, education, agriculture, civics, were executed on a national scale by a Films Committee of the Scottish Development Council, with the aegis of the Secretary of State above it. That was eight years before the accident of war finally gave us a peacetime Central Office of Information.

For some years before the war, two Scottish Directors of Education, Allardyce of Glasgow and Frizell of Edinburgh, were developing visual education in schools. They had their own silent films made, and these and many other films were collected into the Scottish Central Film Library. Kensington's Central Film

Library only grew up during the war, and Committee A and Committee B are only just about to give us our first English programme of planned visual material for schools.

When the war first started, it was a group of Glasgow school teachers, using the resources of the Scottish Central Film Library, who extracted sufficient money from the Treasury to pioneer the first non-theatrical scheme for general rather than commercial purposes. They collected motor cars, converted mains projectors to batteries, and drove thousands of miles round the Highlands, throughout one of the worse winters on record, so that their evacuated schoolchildren could see films. If Thomas Baird (a Scotsman) was able later to persuade the Treasury to finance the Ministry of Information's non-theatrical scheme, it was largely because this pioneer work had proved that the thing was possible.

Distribution is still being pioneered in Scotland.

The Highland Films Guild, which Alastair McNeil Weir has organized, represents all the main interests (civic, governmental, commercial) of the Highland Counties, and with help from St Andrew's House and finance from the Carnegie Trust, is bringing good single-feature programmes to villages which have never seen a film.

And now we have the first International Festival of Documentary Films. The introductory leaflet points out that it is no accident that the Festival is being held in Britain. Let us be honest and admit that it is no accident either that it is being held in Edinburgh. There could be nothing more apt than to bring the whole matter to a focus-point in the birthplace of so much that is fundamental to documentary's progress.

There will be four separate performances in the city's largest cinema and supplementary performances in the Guild theatre. Films to be shown: *Paisa*, *Farrebique*, *A String of Beads*, *Indonesia Calling*, *Cumberland Story*, and shorts from France, Denmark, Poland, Italy, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Australia and Canada.

Naturally, this article was drafted by a Scotsman. But DNL assures its readers that the Board is unanimous in its approval. We wish the Festival every success. Welcome to Scotland!

NOTES OF THE MONTH

The cover still on this issue is from a Danish film *Schoolship*

One Up to Belgium

EVERYONE who went to the Brussels Film Festival was impressed by the efficiency of the organization, the wide variety of the programme and, not least, the helpfulness, courtesy and generosity of the Belgian Government and the various Festival officials. One of the most striking aspects of the Festival was the vast public enthusiasm for the more serious and specialized programmes. It was almost impossible to fight one's way into the scientific film show, which, incidentally, was held in a hall with large seating capacity at the same time as the projection of an American feature film to a rather sparse audience in a small hall nearby. The British film industry, mainly via the BFPA, brought off a big scoop by putting flags inscribed 'See a good British Film' on the bonnets of most of the local taxis. There was also a British Information Centre which attracted a large number of visitors, many of whom bombarded the staff with pertinent and serious questions. In this re-

spect the Centre left something to be desired. Despite the availability of a considerable number of roneoed handouts, there was a definite lack of personnel for answering questions. Documentary production was given too little prominence (possibly because interest in this branch of film-work had been underestimated) and, for most of the time, there was no one at the inquiry desk specially briefed for answering questions on documentary developments in Britain; yet such questions accounted for a large percentage of the daily queries. Nevertheless there can be little doubt that the British Centre was very much more successful than its American counterpart, which, in the words of a Brussels newspaper, 'resembled a dance hall on a transatlantic liner'. Nor, film for film, did the US industry manage to stand up to the product of this country, of France, and above all of Italy which, with *Sciuscia*, *Vivere in Pace*, *Il Sole Sorge Ancora* and the superb *Paisa*, proved itself to be the most important production centre in the world today.

THE FILMS ACT

FOR twenty years there has been legislation to protect and develop the British film production industry. This year it is due once again for revision. On the two previous occasions when a Films Act was debated (in 1927 and 1937) the case for protection was, however, not easily made. British production was small and helpless in the face of Hollywood's numerical and technical superiority, while economically its affairs were literally nobody's business. There was little public realization of the power of the film medium and of the need for making it part of the cultural and economic life of the country.

In the main the case had, therefore, to be argued in a 'Buy British' spirit in a desperate attempt to stem the Hollywood flood.

In the end, British films got a better showing, but they were bad films for the most part, and the patriotic sense of the cinema-going public was severely strained.

Today, circumstances are different. Although Hollywood is economically as powerful as ever and remains the chief supplier of the world's films, it has lost much of its technical and qualitative superiority. British film-making, on the other hand, has gained immensely in prestige and has shown, during the war years, that it has both imagination and a sense of reality. The argument for protection and for guaranteeing the British film-maker more screen-time in the cinemas has now shifted on to grounds of quality. It is no longer a case of saying, rather wanly, this country could produce films, too, if it had a chance. Today it can produce films that have already made a contribution to film-making as well as sent the coins rolling into the box-office.

This improvement in quality of entertainment is, however, limited in extent. For feature films, which constitute the bulk of British studio production today, account for less than half the cinema programme. The remaining 1½ hours are taken up by bad American second features or equally noxious British 'featurettes'. Occasionally a stray short is taken in like an orphan of the storm, but it is rarely a welcome addition to the house. If the issue is to be quality, then it is the supporting programme (the second feature and the shorts) which needs the legislators' particular attention.

The main bone of contention is the fact that the low quality of the supporting programme is not due to lack of talent in this country. The documentary and short section of the British industry has earned a considerable reputation. It has also an extensive production capacity. In the last five or six years as many feet of film have come out of the documentary and short units as all the feature studios together. Yet there is no market in the cinemas for their productions. During the war, largely as a result of special arrangements between the Government and the trade, a number of films like *Target for Tonight*, *Western Approaches*, *Desert Victory* and *World of Plenty* did enjoy wide distribution in the cinemas and proved box-office successes. But with the end of the war the barriers have been raised once again. Yet the success of the Rank-sponsored series, 'This Modern Age', over the post-war years proves that there is a market if the trade is willing. There is the talent and capacity in this country to produce not only shorts but longer story documentaries, to take the place of the present low-grade supporting films. There is also scope for cartoons, comedies, short story and other types of film which could add variety and balance to the cinema programme.

So long as the whole machinery of film renting, aided and

abetted by the existing Films Act, operates in favour of the cheap and nasty, no improvement in the supporting programmes is, however, possible. The present Films Act introduced a cost test for feature films as a guarantee of quality, but provided no cost test for shorts. By artificially dividing films according to length into two categories—long and short—it encouraged the production of 'featurettes', short films padded out to just over 3,000 feet to qualify for long film quota. But it is above all the hand of the big renting companies and of the three major cinema circuits which is at work. It is they who determine what is to be the fate of the independently produced film, whether it be feature, documentary or short. Today, it is as plain as it has ever been that it is only the American film or the British film produced by the big combines which has full access to the cinema market. The inalienable freedom of the others is the freedom to want.

The proposals submitted to the Board of Trade by the producers' associations all agree in recommending measures to reduce further American penetration into the production and exhibition branches of the industry and to increase the screen-time allocated to British films. They also agree on a new quota system based on a division of films into first features, second features or intermediates and shorts (instead of just long and short as in the past) which should help to eliminate some of the shoddy productions encouraged by the present Act. But this alone will not solve the problem of the supporting programme. A reasonable cost test to ensure higher quality for all categories is essential. It would prevent renters paying the ridiculously low figures they offer at present for short and documentary films, a figure which does not even cover production costs and is often an insult to the maker. The new Act should prevent such films being bought for less than production cost and, if they are rented, the producer should get a more equitable percentage of the receipts. A separate contract should be required for each film to reduce the dangers of block-booking, the practice by which exhibitors are forced to take films they do not want in order to get the film they are really interested in.

It is also most important that producers should have better representatives on the Cinematograph Films Council which is the body operating the present Films Act. At the moment only two producers have seats, Mr Rank and Sir Alexander Korda, as against four exhibitors' and two renters' representatives. The documentary and short section has no representation at all.

All these proposals, and the counter-proposals from the exhibitors must, however, be seen against the economic background of the industry and of Britain's financial relations with America. Hollywood interests will lobby hard to prevent any further measures designed to raise the volume and quality of British production. The American companies' takings from abroad (of which 75 per cent come from Britain) represent the whole of their profits. They naturally fear increasing competition. There is the further complication of the Rank organization's own relations with Hollywood, and the carrot of increased distribution for British films in the States which suggests some arrangement with regard to the future of American films in Britain.

The successful development of British film-making and the quality of the entertainment offered to the cinema public depend on the action which the Government will take. The new Films Act is one of the keys to the problem.

IMPROVING BRITAIN'S FILM BUSINESS

By

IVOR MONTAGUE

The trade unions, that is, the organizations of the workers, in the film business—the technicians and non-technical craftsmen, the actors, extras, musicians—have unitedly* presented certain opinions on the protection and improvement of Britain's film industry to the Board of Trade.

The self-interest of those who earn their living in the film business naturally urges such characters to decide that such a business should exist and be encouraged. But here self-interest marches with national interest.

Simply a squawk 'Preserve the film industry for me to work in' could not be expected to command much sympathy among the wider public, especially during a period when the man-power needs of valuable industries are clamorous.

But Britain needs a film industry and an expanded one.

Partly it needs it to save dollars.

However, expansion on the scale necessary can't be achieved quickly enough. It would require studio building and equipment manufacture on a scale impossible with the recently existing queue of priorities. So, for saving dollars now, some other means is necessary. Voluntary measures won't achieve the trick, for the British industry is overwhelmingly as to retailing, wholesaling and production, dominated either by direct US interests, or by big concerns whose profit from American product (i.e., US indirect interest) is greater than their British interest, hence who have no particular interest in saving dollars. Hence the Chancellor's powers to impose an *ad valorem* tax.

But still more Britain needs a strengthened and independent industry because films are not soap.

Even if you could afford to pay for imported films, it would not be a matter of indifference to you whether you saw one film or another, as it is whether you wash with one piece of soap or another. After the latter, either way you're clean. After the former, you will be left with a lifelong different impression, according to whether you saw film A or film B.

* Mr T. O'Brien, MP, of the National Association of Theatrical and Cinematograph Employees, has stepped rather sharply out of the ranks in a BBC broadcast. Mr O'Brien's views are his own, they do not differ widely from those of his cronies, Johnson (of the Motion Picture Producers of America), Walsh (of the IATSE), and Mr Walter Fuller (of CEA). His organization (the NATKE) subscribed with the other employees' organizations in the FIEC to a common memorandum—IVOR MONTAGUE.

It cannot be a matter of national indifference what films we see. Nor what is the general content of that big part of screen time that comes from abroad.

Something like 80 per cent of British screen-time falls to American films. Don't run away with the illusion that the ideas in American films and in British films are the same, because they have a similar, or at least a mutually comprehensible language on the sound-track.

Some American speak the same idea-language as some Englishmen; others, alas, speak a very different one.

Take the TU language, for example.

Congress has just passed, over the President's veto, anti-trade union legislation that would, thank God, at any rate at present be utterly impossible over here. If such legislation existed in Britain there is not one TU in the film business that would not be put out of business. The union shop would be out, such all-industry agreements as the Studio Features Agreement, the Shorts agreement, or the Labs agreement would be right out. Any strike (such as that recently of the repair and despatch workers) would be out if it could be pretended that it were jurisdictional, and no strike at all might take place with less than two months notice. Any union could be outlawed and any of whose officers were communists or can 'reasonably be supposed to be' such.

These are not, thank God, British ideas yet.

Is there any reason to suppose that these or similar ideas will seep into American films? Most certainly there is.

On March 27 this year Eric Johnson, president of the Motion Picture Producers' Association of America, insisted in Washington before the House Committee on un-American activities that 'the films are serving capitalism effectively as a propaganda medium', and promised that this service would be intensified.

At the end of April he stated, just before leaving for Europe to try to increase showing time for US films, that he had prepared for the expedition by a private discussion with President Truman on the importance of implementing American foreign policy through film distribution.

There are several hints from Hollywood's past on how this duty will be interpreted. MGM's

insistence on distributing the anti-working class *Comrade* and anti-Soviet *Ninotchka* during the war, not only in Britain (despite a request to desist from the MOI) but also in Finland while that country was fighting in Russia is one example. Twentieth-Century Fox's false and lying *Chetnik* is another; here exhibition was persisted in despite official advice from the British Government.

But there are clearer hints from the present—e.g. the ugly scuffle among the major companies to be first with the titles *Soviet Spies* and *Iron Curtain*, etc., the declared intention to make a film of the report of the Canadian Royal Commission's report.

Note, it is the report that is to be used, not the trials or appeals which have already acquitted more than half those named as 'guilty' in the report itself. Note also Hollywood is not making a comedy—or tragedy—out of the Seattle spy trial, where the case collapsed because, when the FBI dictaphone record of the alleged 'Soviet Agents' conversation was at last reproduced in court, it turned out not to be about a secret formula but about a cooking recipe.

But more significant than the positive indications are the negative ones.

The pen this side has reported something of the witch-hunt started in Hollywood by the un-American Activities House Committee, the pose as sacrificial lambs, coerced into red propaganda against their will, by Adolphe Menjou, Robert Taylor and Ginger Rogers (per her mother). The atmosphere, and the effects to be apprehended from this pressure, may be gauged from two lists of subversive films requiring investigation supplied to the said committee. First one includes *Mission to Moscow*. Understandable? *Song of Russia*. Well—yeah. *Song to Remember*. A bit odder. Why this one? Do you not remember, this showed the artist sacrificing wealth and devoting art not to love of woman alone but to the liberation of his country. A subversive idea. *Action in the North Atlantic*. Momansk was the convoy's port of destination; definitely bad. The seamen were hired for their voyage as a trade union HQ; inexcusable. *Hitler's Children*. So anti-Nazi that it must have been inspired by Communists. Finally—*Strange Incident*. An anti-lynching film. The lists' compiler commented: 'It is not hard to tell in what direction the propaganda is pointing'. Nor is it hard to tell where objections to it are pointing, either.

The second list of 'Red' films? Well, I will only note that it includes *The Pride of the Marines*, *Margie*, and *The Best Years of Our Lives*.

I do not think it can be a matter of indifference to us if a large part of Britain's American diet comes to us following this sort of 'screening'.

Please note, it is *not* anti-American to make this point. All decent folk in Hollywood are finding the courage to hit back. Thirty thousand attended the Wallace meeting, where Katherine Hepburn forcibly denounced these goings on. Hedy Lamarr, Edward G. Robinson, Charles Chaplin, John Garfield, Emmet Lavery (Screen Writers Guild president), are only a few of the many who have done so in writing. But if we show what we think of such tendencies, it will help the ones resisting over there. Their employers will think twice if anti-working class, anti-United Nations, propaganda effect their export revenue.

It is incontestable anyway (at least incontestable by honest folk) that the British people need the screen medium for its own ideas. All the more while it is threatened with the cited threats.

It needs it for more than entertainment. However important relaxation and diversion in the midst of austerity may be—if they rate 80 per cent, 90 per cent, or even 95 per cent of screen time, they do *not* rate 100 per cent, which under the present exclusively profit-motivated structure of the industry, tied and penetrated by American export interest, is what Britain is getting.

So those who want Britain to have its own film business, and for that film business to play the worth-while role in the community that it can, have a busy time ahead of them. Hard work, but that's the job.

Even radio has a third programme. And where on any British screen (except the negligibly few and tiny specialized cinemas) does any imported film other than an American appear. In Prague last year 28 cinemas were running British films at one time. Every town and village was running some. Find me one ordinary regular British fan who has ever seen even one Czech film.

And what about the cinemas as news? Would we stand for our newspapers being owned three-fifths by Americans and two-fifths by one magnate with American connections? And yet we take exactly that situation in news film.

Is it conceivable that if cinema had been invented even as late as broadcasting—cinema with its infinite possibilities for national education, national expression, international cultural get-together and get-to-know-each-other—it would ever have been allowed to get into the largely foreign and exclusively profit-interested stranglehold that grips it now?

That is why the unions are pressing their proposals, which fall mainly into two categories.

Proposals for getting a fairer share of box-office money and screen-time for the films that are made; tidying up and enlarging quota, re first feature and supporting quotas, bigger role for shorts, changed booking customs—relaxing of bars, increase of longer runs and return runs for British films.

Proposals for strengthening independent production as against the monopolies with their big American interests; films bank, 4th (documentary) circuit, municipal cinemas, government ensured studio space, etc.

And a Films Council with strengthened powers to oversee these measures and also to ensure that the class-prejudices of the producers no longer deprive the industry of the benefit of Joint Production Committees.

But remember—none of these things will come willingly from the film business, dominated as it is by interests keen on most of them not coming to being.

And none will come spontaneously from a government, facing copious problems, jammed up with necessary prospective legislation, and grasping at the chance to escape more trouble by a line-of-least-resistance patching job whenever it can.

Only to the extent that public opinion—a particularly organized forward-seeing opinion with the TUC (that is, the non-film unions) in the first place—can be brought to understand the plain and simple fundamentals at stake will the government be moved. And remember, there will be plenty of active publicizing scoundrels taking refuge in the matchless intricacies of the structure of the film business (blinding 'em with science) to damp down any feeling that changes are needed.

A LETTER FROM COI FILMS DIVISION ON NON-THEATRICAL DISTRIBUTION

SIR: The article by 'Technician' in the April-May issue of DNL, claiming to give inside information on non-theatrical distribution, frankly sets out to be a one-sided statement. Broadly, Technician's view is that a film when delivered from the hands of the production company may be technically irreproachable ('let us assume the studio has done its work perfectly' is the cheerful hypothesis from which he starts) but that everything is likely to go wrong from this point on.

It would be a fairer statement of the whole case to say that the quality of 16mm. film shows in England needs to be raised by the exercise of greater care and thought at every stage of the whole business. And it must start at production.

To do the production companies justice, we are long past the stage at which everybody connected with film-making sedulously avoided seeing (or hearing) films in 16 mm., and kept up his self-respect by a fantasy that his films were being distributed in 35 mm. There is still a long way to go, however.

Meanwhile, we shall not make the journey any quicker by indulging in all-round recriminations—the projectionists blaming the recordists,

the recordist blaming the laboratories and the laboratories blaming the documentary producers. We undoubtedly need in England more opportunity for experiment in production for 16 mm., more up-to-date recording equipment, better laboratory equipment, more first-class projectors, and so on.

As to what COI can do to assist in the general improvement, the answer is that several things are being done. (a) COI is considering the possibility that future contracts on films intended primarily for 16 mm. use should have a clause providing that they will not be accepted until a 16 mm. copy has been approved. (b) Proposals have been made for an extension of the existing system of viewing 16 mm. prints, on delivery from the laboratories. (c) New projectors are on order. (d) A special drive to tighten up the technical inspection of the mobile units is in progress. Undoubtedly more could be done if COI had more staff and more money, and if the flow of equipment available for purchase were more copious. Incidentally, if Technician's criticisms had really done justice to the title 'Inside Information'—which his editors have bestowed

upon him, he would have admitted the difficulties which his brother-technicians have to encounter in securing equipment; and it is really unfair of him to suggest that a COI projector is not serviced until it has run to a standstill.

One final point: the implications of Technician's concluding paragraph is that all or most COI shows are given to rural audiences in village halls. The rural audience is, in fact, no more than ten per cent of the total COI non-theatrical audience and there has recently been a new drive to cut out those rural shows which do not attract satisfactory audiences. If Technician could spare time to see a first-class show, given by means of a tip-top 16 mm. projector, in a good factory canteen, or the assembly-hall of a school where a vigorous parent-teacher association meets to see films on children's health, or even in the best of the village halls, he might be convinced that it is not only the production studio which can, on occasion, do its work with something reasonably near to that perfection for which his soul obviously longs.

J. R. WILLIAMS
Films Division, COI

NEW DOCUMENTARY FILMS

There has in the past been some criticism of the DNL policy of publishing reviews unsigned.

To compromise with the divergent views on the subject, therefore, a new system has been devised.

In the future all films will be viewed by a permanent panel selected from members of the editorial board, who will take collective responsibility for the views expressed. Each review will continue as before to be individually written but, unless expressly stated to the contrary, this will have been contributed by one or other of the members of this panel. In the exceptional case where specialist audiences are involved, the source of review will be stated below.

May we again remind film units and sponsors that we cannot publish reviews unless they provide us with adequate information on films completed.

The names of the members of the reviewing panel are as follows: Stephen Ackroyd, Donald Alexander, Max Anderson, Paul Fletcher, Grahame Sharp, Sinclair Road.

SUMMING UP No. 3

Pathé are to be congratulated on their initiative in bringing to the light of day some of the invaluable film records of world events which the newsreel companies amass over the years, but generally keep hidden away and unused in their vaults.

This series was described in the last issue of DNL—History on Film by Peter Baylis. It attempts to give a pictorial record of the main news events of each quarter and is designed primarily for school use. No. 3 deals with events of the first quarter of 1947.

One can appreciate the difficulty of collecting material giving adequate coverage of world affairs, but one's first reaction is to challenge the statement in Issue No. 3 that the principal events of the quarter took place in the British Empire! The temptation to look at world affairs from a domestic viewpoint is considerable. But particularly in a series designed for schools one expects wider perspectives.

This issue also has certain technical weaknesses, the sound track is bad, and the commentary rather ineffectual and badly spoken. Better quality library material, too, should have been available.

Summing Up could do a much more valuable job if it had a stronger sense of what all this motley of events is about. What is happening in India is part of a whole pattern of development in South-East Asia. Food crisis in Germany, the coal crisis in Britain cannot be understood in isolation. The problems of one world, trying to adjust itself to new situations and to find new relationships, are indivisible.

But, despite its shortcomings, *Summing Up* has made a brave start. One should watch its future development with interest.

Brush Stripping of Cards. DATA Films for the Cotton Board. Producer: Donald Alexander. Written and directed: Peter Bradford. Camera: Stanley Rodwell. Distribution: Non-T. through Cotton Board. 12 mins.

DATA films for the Cotton Board are making an interesting series: here is one on industrial training, which will do much to justify documentary talk on the subject.

It does not matter that few people outside the industry will have any idea of what a card is or what it does that it has to be stripped. What does matter is that after seeing this film most people could go straight to the machine with a very good idea in their minds of how the job has to be done, and that is what the film was intended to teach the workers for whom it was designed.

Taking a single machine it first shows the whole process of brush stripping carried out at normal speed by the two men required. Next the movements are tabulated and the same operation is repeated in slow motion. Then in turn the movements of each man are analysed in detail and finally, to sum up the whole sequence of movement, repeated again. The relationship of this one machine to the others is, with one exception, shown by diagram in preference to actuality. This is one of the few questionable points, for the diagrams do not seem very clear. To the audience familiar with shop layout this may not be valid. One feels, too, that a more flexible use of the camera might have heightened the interest. Still, given the machine and the method, one could ask little more.

Experience of the use of industrial training films of this type is small, so that the information it will provide on audience reactions will be of considerable importance. One general comment should, however, be added. This is such a serious film. Instructional films must be coldly factual, but surely just a touch of humour or human interest would have helped to put the film over. And, between ourselves Data, try reading that opening title again—slowly!

Waterworks: Films of Fact. Producers: Paul Rotha and John Wales. Script: Miles Tomalin. Director: George Collins. Camera: Cyril Arapoff.

This film explains and describes the complex organization behind the production of a glass of water. It does this with considerable success and it is also exciting to find such an example of imaginative public relationship. It is therefore tragic that the film does not quite click, for it has a lifeless atmosphere of simplified technicalities and carefully arranged facts. This is due in the first place to the choice of facts emphasized. The explanation of filtration is clear but does not get very far, whereas more emphasis on chlorination could have led us to appreciate the relationship

between the ratepayer and the technician, between the man who gets indignant if perfectly good water tastes of chlorine and the man who wants to hold his job.

In the second place, the method of explaining is not always happy. An Isotype diagram which shows clouds clanking their way out of the sea may describe the Water Cycle but it can also lead to a healthy childish exasperation; for it is an example of a teaching approach which seems to say 'This may not look convincing but you jolly well ought to believe it anyway'. For, unfortunately, such a method could be equally well used to show how Father Christmas gets down chimneys. A livelier method could have avoided this by using simple demonstrations, and a brighter approach would have lessened the need to decorate this packet of facts with romantic clouds and accompanying music.

THIS MODERN AGE

No. 8. Sudan Dispute.

No. 9. Development Areas.

Distribution: GFD. 20 minutes each film.

It is probably part of the policy of the producers of *This Modern Age* to allow to their directors as much variety of approach as is consistent with uniformity of presentation, and perhaps for this reason the series shows as yet no sign of becoming a monotonous succession of die-stamped articles so similar in design that the audience knows what to expect as soon as the main title appears on the screen. Or perhaps the overall editorial policy of the series is being allowed to form itself as issue follows issue. Whichever may be the case, there is a very marked difference in the way the two latest issues approach their subjects.

Sudan Dispute undoubtedly fulfils the function of giving us a picture of part of the world of which most of us know little but for which we are all to some extent responsible. But whether the picture we are given is an accurate one is, perhaps, more questionable. Is the Sudan really the strapping, bright-futured youngster that the film describes? Is its Government actually such an exemplar of enlightened, beneficial rule? Is the possibility of Egyptian sovereignty in fact quite as unpleasant as the *vox ex machina* would have us believe? The answer to these questions may indeed and in truth be yes, but the fact that they are uppermost in the mind after one has seen the film indicates something wrong with the way the subject has been treated. *This Modern Age* sets out to be an independent screen review. At all costs it should avoid arousing the suspicion that it is temporarily and honorarily serving as the smooth-tongued spokesman of officialdom—or indeed of any other section of the community.

Happily, an unbiased approach is the outstanding characteristic of *Development Areas*;

and, even better, the maintenance of a true balance between black and white does not result in a lifeless grey. Well-scripted, well directed, well edited, the film gives as complete a survey as one could expect in twenty minutes of the growth and present appearance of these stigmata of a mis-spent national life. The treatment is forceful and, compared with the mouselike timidity of many films on similar subjects, as bold as a lion—a circus lion, anyway. It is on issues such as this, rather than *Sudan Dispute*, that *This Modern Age* should build a reputation as an adult, entertaining, informative, reliable screen periodical.

Taken for Granted. Production: World Wide for Middlesex County Council. Producer: James Carr. Script and Director: Mary Francis. Camera: Cyril Phillips. Distribution: Not yet announced. 20 mins.

'Before 1865' all the London sewers discharged into the Thames, by some 64 separate openings. They caused the river to stink prodigiously, and also infected most of London's drinking water.'

That is not a quotation from the commentary of the film, but from Sherwood Taylor's *Century of Science*, in which, with an almost Elizabethan robustness, he surveys our more immediate past—what, it appears, might well be called 'The Dirtiest Hundred Years in European History'. Unfortunately, there is no echo of Sherwood Taylor's forceful handling of his subject in the treatment of this film. Well-made though it be, and it is a competently directed and photographed film, it yet lacks that imaginative treatment which would take it out of the rut where so many documentaries of today are to be found.

This film, the story of the disposal of the sewage of a modern urban community, gives the impression of a painstaking preparation of its subject. We are interested in it because this story is unknown in detail to most of us, but never are we stimulated into that rapt attentiveness which overcomes hard seats or sends us out into the sunshine at the end, if not with a mission, at least aware that someone else has one. It is possible that the reason for so much of the dullness of documentary today, and to be quite fair this film is lively compared with some others, lies in just this very carefulness of research into subject-material. Perhaps we must learn to throw the net of our investigations wider.

Who would think, for instance, of reading or (I hope) re-reading Hans Andersen's *The Tin Soldier* and Charles Sale's genially Rabelaisian *The Specialist* as part of the necessary preparation for writing a script about sewage-disposal? But each of these would add a quality lacking in the film as it is. The first would have reminded us that gutters in spate are admirable places for the sailing of paper boats (what worse hazard than a drain?); and the second that the foundation of all sewage systems lay very much in the earth—for as Lem Putt said, 'It's a mighty sight better to have a little privy over a big hole than a big privy over a little hole'. Even without such lively aids, surely the director, producer or script writer at one time or another has lost something valuable down a drain—maybe in his or her distant childhood such a photogenic object as a beloved goldfish or a tadpole? And where are the rats?

In spite of this general criticism, however, there emerges from the film a good sense of the admirable public service which quietly deals with this perpetual human problem, carrying out its

work, in this example, at the minute cost of 2d. per week per ratepayer. The control of sewage has progressed a good deal since the period of the quotation from Sherwood Taylor. 'Down the drain' is no longer synonymous for 'All is lost'. Indeed, the by-products of modern sewage-disposal methods, fertilizer for the land and methane gas, properly used, are perhaps symbolic of the general trend of today which seeks to use our resources according to our needs with an ever-growing insistence on the elimination of thoughtless waste.

Salt. Realist for ICI. Director: Max Anderson. Camera: Ronald Craigen. 10 mins.

Ammonia. Realist for ICI. Direction: Bob Anderson and Denys Parsons. Camera: A. E. Jeakins. Diagrams: Diagram Films. 10 mins.

The increasing number of school teaching films sets a reviewing problem. It is axiomatic that a film designed for a particular audience should only be judged by its effect upon that audience. Films such as these two need 'reviewing' in the school itself. But until some mechanism is devised for routine class room testing they must continue to be assessed by the minds of adults.

These points are stressed because the reaction of an adult to these films is that they are dull. In neither film is there a single memorable shot—but is this true for children? Only practical use will show.

Salt is a film designed for primary and lower secondary school grades. It tells briefly of our physiological need for salt, surveys the natural resources—sea water, rock salt and underground brine—and shows the method of large scale production from each. It concludes by showing some of the most important uses of salt itself, and demonstrates articles of daily use in whose manufacture salt plays a part.

Comment must be limited to a few of the questions that rise to the mind. Does, for example, a survey of this kind mean anything to a child of this age group? Children are completely personal in their outlook on life; salt here never becomes a reality in a personal sense. Are children interested in so much manufacturing detail? Does the model showing the method of salt evaporation convince better than a simple explanation of the principle using a familiar dish or pan? Will a child 'register' the fact that things such as glass need salt in their manufacture unless some explanation is given? Children want to know the 'why' about things. There is a barrage of questions in store for the teacher. And finally—the crucial test—does this film in fact show anything which the teacher could not equally well put over without it?

Ammonia is for a different age group—the chemistry and general science classes of school certificate level. Basically it follows the same pattern. Beginning by reminding the class of laboratory methods of making ammonia, it passes to a short statement of its use in the home, for refrigeration and the manufacture of a number of essential products. The bulk of the film is then taken up by a detailed explanation of the Haber Bosch method for the manufacture of ammonia from air and water on a commercial scale.

This later part the film explains well with actuality and diagram. Had it been called 'The Manufacture of Ammonia' it could have been given full marks. But it is not, and so again there are questions: Do shots of refrigeration spell

ammonia? One short cross section diagram would have driven the point home. Does this recital of objects produced through the use of ammonia put its point over? Is manufacture really so important—except to the sponsor? This process does have to be learned, and the film is a help in explaining it, but in a general film the proportion of space given to it seems excessive.

Such reactions as these are coloured no doubt by the hopes aroused by their arrival of some new contribution to the urgent problems of visual education. If these are not fulfilled it must in fairness be added that these two films are much superior to most films of this type, and that with the limited range available today, teachers will find in them much that is useful. Technically both films are of high quality, a fact which explains the level of criticism.

Teaching notes which elaborate many of the points made in the films are being designed to accompany them.

Take Thou. Basic for Evans Medical Supplies in association with Film Centre.

Photography: Rod Baxter. Director: Kay Mander. Script: John Rhodes. Camera: A. Englander.

Distribution: Publicity Department, Evans Medical Supplies. 25 mins.

Documentary has been prone to regard a 'tour-of-the-works' as beneath serious consideration—as veiled advertising. Yet the activities of a large business house can be fascinating to the outside observer, and moreover, by integrating the work of the individual into the group, can give meaning to his apparently routine job (as the GPO Film Unit has shown). *Take Thou* is, we hope, but the first of many such films which while being undoubtedly a 'tour-of-the-works' carry no advertising message. Here is surveyed in briefest outline the rise of the pharmaceutical industry, the preparation on a vast scale of herb extracts, of fine chemicals, of synthetic hormones, of animal extracts and sera, and all the other drugs which stack the shelves of our chemists' shops. But manufacture is only the first part of the work; these products must be tested for purity and activity as well as for possible harmful inclusions, and finally they must be packed and dispatched in quantities of a few milligrams or of many tons. The film moves fast through the many departments and processes, being concerned more with the broad picture than with any detailed procedures. For so superficial a survey the commentary is perhaps overloaded with technical terms, even for a specialized audience: the English language has some good simple synonyms for long technical words which would have been more in keeping with this record of the working man doing his job. Nevertheless *Take Thou* is a straightforward presentation, having much in common with *Twenty-Four Square Miles*, for the photography is completely subservient to the subject-matter, the lighting is unpretentious, and one notices a commendable absence of that beautification process which commonly precedes the arrival of a film unit. Here is a simple unpretentious film, which by direct demonstration rather than cinematic virtuosity portrays forcefully the widespread activities of just one British business organization.

* The two starred reviews were written for DNL before the new Reviewing Panel had been formed.

SCIENTIFIC FILM NEWS ON

THE INTERNATIONAL PROSPECT

By JOHN MADDISON

THE TRADITION that the fruits of research should be freely exchanged between the scientists of all nations is a long-established one. During the past century, this international traffic in ideas has played a vital role in the spectacular growth of our organized knowledge about the universe. Where scientific books, periodicals and records of proceedings are concerned, an efficient world wide system of interchange has been built up. But in the case of the cinema, this new instrument of research and communication, no such international mechanism of distribution exists.

There are, of course, reasons for this. Cinematography is only some fifty years old. Films are industrial products, and relatively costly. Trade restrictions and customs barriers prevent them from travelling easily across national frontiers. Yet the need for the freest and widest exchange of scientific films is urgent, if only on the ground of their potential value in raising levels of productivity in a period of almost universal impoverishment.

UNESCO

The Scientific Film Association has from the beginning recognized this need. The promotion of the international use of the scientific film was put high among its aims. The end of the war and the creation of a Film Department at UNESCO brought the hope that the international importance of the scientific film might be more fully realized. Already by 1946, the Association's contacts with foreign countries were numerous, and in the summer of that year, it set up a special committee to handle its international relations. This committee was also meant to serve as a means of liaison between the Association and any national body the Ministry of Education might set up for co-operation with UNESCO.

Preparatory Work

The Association's chief activity in this field during the past year has been its collaboration with the French Institut de Cinématographie Scientifique in the preparatory work towards creating an international scientific film organization. The French had for a long time done pioneer work by bringing together each year at their scientific film festivals the work of many countries. At the last of these in October, 1946, the Scientific Film Association delegation enjoyed the privilege of seeing the work of such experts as Comandon, Leclerc and Thévenard of France, Van der Horst of Holland, Hans Richter of Switzerland, and Iachine and Loukachevitch from the Soviet Union; as well as screening a number of outstanding British productions. More important perhaps than this, the British and the French engaged in conversations with colleagues from Czechoslovakia, Poland,

Sweden and America, at which William Farr, of UNESCO, attended as a sympathetic observer.

Congress in the Autumn

It was evident at these meetings that the time had come to establish some sort of international organization to keep scientific film-makers and users throughout the world in permanent liaison with each other. The British and French undertook to organize a congress to inaugurate such a movement. It was to be held in Paris in the autumn of 1947. They agreed also to prepare a draft constitution to lay before this congress. The preparation of this document has naturally involved much labour and thought, and frequent consultations between London and Paris. In it, basic principles and certain urgent needs have, it is hoped, found practical expression. The contribution which science can make to human happiness and the part films can play in this, are given first importance. Among the aims proposed for the new organizations are the removal of barriers to the international exchange not only of scientific films, but also of the skill of film technicians, the experience of film users and the products of research into new optical and photographic techniques. The inaugural Congress will take place in Paris on October 2nd, 3rd and 4th, 1947; it will be followed immediately by an International Scientific Film Festival. At this festival, the screen time allotted to each nation is so arranged as to give an equal share to any nation which may wish to participate. By the time this article appears in print, invitations to the Congress and to the festival will have gone out above the signatures of Jean Painlevé, Director of the Institut de Cinématographie Scientifique and Basil Wright, President of our own Association, to appropriate bodies in all countries.

Other Activities

All this is but one aspect of the Association's work in the international field. Counsel has been given on the selection of British scientific films to be shown at a number of international festivals. Enquiries from abroad have been met out of the collective knowledge of the Association's Standing Committees in Industry, Medicine and Education. Films and film strips on biology, mathematics, astronomy, statistics and physics from the USA, Canada, China, Denmark, the Soviet Union and South Africa have been shown to members. Honour has been done to distinguished foreign visitors; to Pierre de Fonbrune, the eminent cinemicrographer from the Institut Pasteur (invited to Britain by the British Council from whose Science Department the Association has received valuable co-operation); to Jean Benoit-Lévy, head of the Film Department of UN; and to Vít Hejny, head of the

Czechoslovak School Films Department. At this latter occasion, during the Czech Festival in May, a Czech-British scientific film programme gave us the opportunity of seeing Dr Hejny's own film on educational psychology, and the films on ellipses and parabolas, made by Franz Kysela, who also took part in the discussions in Paris last October.

The Daily Work

These meetings have underlined, in a pleasant fashion, the identity of interest between the scientists, teachers and cinematographers of different nations. But equally important, the Association feels, is the more humdrum day-to-day work of collecting data essential to its international purposes. At the request of UNESCO, details have been provided of the system of appraising and cataloguing films evolved here in Britain by the Association, and of the Association's Medical Committee's work on the use of microfilm for disseminating library information on films. On the suggestion of the Director of UNESCO'S Department of Mass Media, John Grierson (who takes a shrewd and lively interest in this as in so many other matters), the British Council made a verbatim record of the proceedings at the Association's March Conference on *Films in Industry*, so that its findings might be circulated to other countries. Throughout the year, the Association's international librarian, Denys Parsons, has continued to collect data about the scientific films abroad. A summary of the results of his labours is to be published in the near future. This is the document, relating to the work of thirty-three countries, to the interim version of which Michael Michaelis referred in this column in the June-July number of DNL.

At Home

Here in Britain, particularly in the growing ranks of the Scientific Film Society movement, there is a desire to see more frequently examples of film-making abroad. The requests received by the Association from other countries reveal an equal desire that British scientific films should be more readily available to them. The Paris Congress will seek to provide the blueprint for an organization through which these and other exchanges may be increased. In the meantime, the Association has set up a Working Party to realize a more limited aim. It will collect and list the titles of scientific films available through the diplomatic representatives in London of all foreign countries. In addition, it will seek to discover from the owners or sponsors of all films in the Association's *Catalogue of Films of General Scientific Interest* how best users abroad may have access to them. The co-operation of readers of DNL, possessing information of value in this work, would be welcomed.

CATALOGUE OF MOI & COI FILMS—6th SUPPLEMENT

(January 1st—December 31st, 1946)

FILMS MADE BY THE MOI & COI

A General Films

B Trailers

C Colonial Film Unit

1. Monthly release films underlined

2. Names of people in brackets do not appear on credit titles.

3. T = Mainly Theatrical Distribution

NT = Mainly Non-Theatrical Distribution

I = For Specialized or Selected Audiences

OO = Primarily for Overseas Distribution

OOO = Overseas Distribution Only

The abbreviation 'O' for 'Despatched Overseas' has been omitted, since almost all MOI films are exported.

4. Length is recorded in feet of 35 mm. gauge.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS—NUMBER OF FILMS PRODUCED BY THE MOI AND COI

CATEGORY	1940a	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	TOTAL
Five Minute	20	37	29	—	—	—	—	86
Fifteen Minute	—	—	1	12	12	12	—	37
Monthly Release	—	—	—	—	—	—	13	13
General T Distribution	14	5	7	8	5	8	14	61
General N.T. Distribution	23	7	35	21	28	39	26	179
Specialized or Selected Audiences	6	12	24	27	13	12	33L	127
Mainly Overseas	—	—	12	7	6	2	4	31
Wholly Overseas	3	10	18	39	15	6	3	94
Trailers	8	15	34	46	51	37HUK	37M	228
Total	74	86	160	160	130	116	130	856
Colonial Film Unit	8	10	16a	30c	36	30PG	19	149
Acquired 5- and 15-Minute Films	2	10	17	10	—	10	—	31

A Includes 2 films for T release delivered in 1939.

B Includes 4 16 mm. productions.

C Includes 12 Empire at War productions.

D 15-minute films.

E Excludes 3 re-issues, includes 3 issues in Scotland only and 3 in England and Wales only.

F Includes 5 16 mm. productions.

G Includes 9 'Empire at War' compilations.

H Re-issue.

J 3 issued in Scotland only.

K Not issued.

L Includes 1 film on 16 mm. Kodachrome only.

M Includes 4 re-issues.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS—FOOTAGE OF FILMS PRODUCED BY THE MOI AND COI

CATEGORY	1940a	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	TOTAL
Five Minute	13,791	25,113	20,141	—	—	—	—	59,045
Fifteen Minute	—	—	1,316	15,216	16,041	14,832	—	47,405
Monthly Release	—	—	—	—	—	—	12,622	12,622
General T Distribution	16,673	9,228	22,506	33,833	17,524	31,165	30,478	161,407
General N.T. Distribution	23,545	7,809	41,457	24,010	39,527	55,216	32,618	224,308
Specialized or Selected Audiences	4,109	10,280	30,552	38,568	18,713	17,850	54,245P	171,317
Mainly Overseas	3,100	11,093	16,383	15,081	5,908	6,179	17,672	61,223
Wholly Overseas	1,600	3,000a	22,944	43,115	17,307	8,413	3,706	109,678
Trailers	1,600	3,000a	4,250	5,750C	5,500CO	4,625	3,330MN	28,055
TOTAL	62,818	66,604	159,519	175,613	120,565	138,280HUK	154,671	878,070
Colonial Film Unit	11,919	7,836	13,600D	13,198a	17,844	33,107L	20,569o	118,073
Acquired 5 and 15-Minute Films	1,135	6,657	11,353	1,312F	—	887	—	21,344

A Includes 3,130 feet of T releases delivered in 1939.

B Average length 200 feet.

C Average length 125 feet.

D 16 mm. productions calculated at equivalent 35 mm. footage.

E Includes 12 'Empire at War' compilations.

F Monthly release.

G Excludes 3 re-issues and includes 3 issues in Scotland only, and 3 issues in England and Wales only.

H Re-issued November 19th.

J 3 issued in Scotland only.

K Not yet issued.

L Includes 9 'British Empire at War' compilations.

M Average length 90 feet.

N Includes 360 feet re-issues.

O Includes 2,425 feet of 16 mm. silent.

P Includes 1 film made on 16 mm. Kodachrome.

TITLE	DISTRI-BUTION	PRODUCTION UNIT	PRODUCER	DIRECTOR	RELEASE DATE	LENGTH feet	REMARKS
After Six O'clock	T	Greenpark	Ralph Keene	Humphrey Swingle	16/12/46	957	Shortened version of <i>Good Neighbours</i> , monthly release for December.
As Others See Us	I	Mealin Films	M. Hankinson	R. MacDougall	—	1,126	Training film for Treasury on how to interview the casual caller.
Australians in London, The	OOO	Crown	Alexander Shaw	Colin Dean	—	1,038	Special record of the Australian contingent's part in the Victory Parade.
Beginning of History, The	—	Crown	Basil Wright (Associate: Edgar Anstey)	Graham Wallace	—	4,289	The story of British life and agriculture from the earliest days up to the Roman invasion. Made for Ministry of Education.
Big Four, The	I	Larkins	W. Larkin	—	3/7/46	857	A Cartoon film made for the Ministry of Food.
Birds of the Village	NT	Films of Gt. Britain	Andrew Buchanan (Associate: Edgar Anstey)	Andrew Buchanan	—	1,659	Made for the Ministry of Agriculture to show that most small birds are friends of the farmer. Bird photography: Eric Hosking.
Bridge, The	NT	DATA	Donald Alexander	J. D. Chambers	—	3,500	A story of reconstruction in Yugoslavia.
BDW (Diseases in Poultry)	I	Films of Gt. Britain	Andrew Buchanan (Associate: Edgar Anstey)	Andrew Buchanan	—	1,529	Made for Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. A film for farmers.
Britain Can Make It Series	—	—	—	—	—	—	A monthly film primarily made for distribution in factories. Usually containing three items.
BCMI No. 6	NT	Films of Fact	Jack Holmes	—	3/7/46	913	Contains: (1) Change over airfield into farm; (2) Salitycoerules—the Cricket Bat Willow; (3) Science at the Helm—Navigation Radar.
BCMI No. 2	NT	Films of Fact	Paul Rotha	—	28/2/46	943	Contains: (1) Works Uncle; (2) Bathrooms off the Belt; (3) Mannequin Parade.
BCMI No. 3	NT	Films of Fact	Paul Rotha	—	4/4/46	880	Contains: (1) Aluminium Houses; (2) Design in Industry; (3) Canadian Round Up.
BCMI No. 4	NT	Films of Fact	J. B. Holmes	—	8/5/46	930	Contains: (1) German Reconstruction; (2) Youth Hostels; (3) Plastic Shoes.
BCMI No. 5	NT	Films of Fact	J. B. Holmes	—	30/5/46	921	Contains: (1) ARP; (2) Sunspots; (3) Toys.
BCMI No. 11	NT	Films of Fact	J. B. Holmes	—	26/11/46	917	(1) Ordnance Survey; (2) Bricks.
BCMI No. 7	NT	Films of Fact	Jack Holmes	—	22/7/46	963	(1) Mablethorpe Plan; (2) Plastics Again; (3) Borrow With Interest.
BCMI No. 8	NT	Films of Fact	Jack Holmes	—	27/8/46	922	(1) Queens and Tramps; (2) Egg Packing; (3) Rock Drills.
BCMI No. 9	NT	Films of Fact	Jack Holmes	—	28/9/46	936	(1) Tools for the job; (2) Up to standard; (3) Two Men and a Girl.
BCMI No. 10	NT	Films of Fact	Jack Holmes	—	25/10/46	959	(1) Folding Boats; (2) Clock Works; (3) GPO Fathoms a Problem

BCMI No. 1	NT	Films of Fact	Jack Holmes	—	30/1/46	930	3 items are: (1) Admiralty Concrete Floating Dock; (2) Motion Study; (3) War Artists' Exhibition.
BCMI No. 12	NT	Films of Fact	J. B. Holmes	—	10/12/46	938	One item only: Britain Can Make It Exhibition.
Casting in Steel at Wilson's Forge	I	Basic	R. K. Neilson-Baxter (Associate: Edgar Anstey)	R. K. Neilson-Baxter	Not yet fixed	1,132	This silent film is part of the local study visual unit. Made for the Ministry of Education.
Children on Trial	T & NT	Crown	Basil Wright	Jack Lee	1/8/46	5,562	A study of juvenile delinquents at approved schools for boys and girls.
Cine-Panorama	I	Basic	R. K. Neilson-Baxter (Associate: Edgar Anstey)	Kay Mander	Not yet fixed	388	This silent film is part of the 'Local Study' visual unit. Made for the Ministry of Education.
Civil Engineering	I	Realist	Alexander Shaw	Alexander Shaw and John Eldridge	31/10/46	1,235	One of the Post-War Career Series. Made for the Ministry of Works and Labour.
Clean Farming	I	Campbell Harper	Alan Harper	Alan Harper	10/8/46	1,486	Made for the Department of Agriculture for Scotland for farmers.
Coal Mining Today	I	New Realm	—	Edited by Sylvia Cummins	9/5/46	1,613	One of the Post-War Career Series. Made for the Ministry of Fuel and Power and Ministry of Labour and National Service.
Cotton Come Back	I	DATA	J. B. Holmes	Donald Alexander	2/10/46	2,302	One of the Post-War Career Series. Made for the Board of Trade and Ministry of Labour.
Critical Harvest	T & NT	New Realm	—	Edited by Sylvia Cummins	20/5/46	787	Made for the Ministry of Agriculture. An appeal for workers for the harvest.
Cyprus is an Island Defeated People, A	T & NT	Greenpark Crown	R. Keene Basil Wright	R. Keene Humphrey Jennings	1/6/46 1/3/46	3,053 1,693	Life in Cyprus today. The story of life and conditions and problems facing the German people and the CCG. Spring, 1946.
Defeat Diphtheria, 1945	I	New Realm	—	Edited by Sylvia Cummins	23/5/46	720	A re-edited version of <i>Defeat Diphtheria</i> , 1941, for the Ministry of Health.
Fair Rent	T & NT	DATA	Donald Alexander	Mary Beales	Not yet fixed	999	How Rent Tribunals work in Scotland.
Fight for Life	NT OO	Exploitation	—	Edited by Jim Mellor	19/6/46	1,516	This is one of a series of films about Africa and shows something of the way of life of the peoples of the Gold Coast.
From the Rhine to Victory	OO	British Paramount News	—	Edited by A. S. Graham	2/4/46	4,519	A newsreel compilation of the events from the crossing of the Rhine to VE Day.
From Italy to D Day	OO	British Movietone News	—	Edited by Raymond Perrin	—	2,909	A Newsreel compilation of the events from July 1943 to June, 1944, when the Allies closed in for the final assault on the fortress of Europe.
Furnace Practice Getting On With It	I T	CWS FU	George Wynn	George Wynn	25/6/46 19/8/46	2,740 996	Made for the Ministry of Fuel and Power. Monthly release for August. Compilation from items in <i>This is Britain</i> and <i>Britain Can Make It</i> .
Glen Is Ours, The	T & NT	Verity Films	—	H. Cass	Not yet fixed	2,792	Made for the Scottish Office. A story of Local Government.
Good Neighbours	NT	Greenpark	Ralph Keene	Humphrey Swingle	Not yet fixed	1,377	Made for the Scottish Office. A small community organize and form a Community Centre.
How to Make Cakes	NT I	Films of Gt. Britain	Andrew Buchanan	Andrew Buchanan	25/2/46	991	Instructional film made for the Ministry of Food.
How to Make Jam	NT I	Films of Gt. Britain	Andrew Buchanan	Andrew Buchanan	25/2/46	1,000	Instructional film made for the Ministry of Food.
How to Prepare Salads	NT I	Films of Gt. Britain	Andrew Buchanan	Andrew Buchanan	28/2/46	934	Instructional film made for the Ministry of Food.
Instruments of the Orchestra	T & NT	Crown	Alexander Shaw	Muir Mathieson	1/10/46	1,821	Made for the Ministry of Education. Answers the question, What is a Symphony Orchestra?
Institutional Domestic Service	—	Merlin	Michael Hankinson	Gilbert Gunn	25/11/46	1,411	Made for the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Labour. One of a film series about jobs after the war.
Hausa Village	T & NT	Taurus	—	Joan Duff	14/11/46	1,949	A day in the life of one of the villages of the Hausa people who live in N. Nigeria.
Home and School	NT	Crown	Alexander Shaw	Gerry Bryant	Not yet fixed	1,815	Made for Ministry of Education to encourage the growth of Parent Teacher Associations.
Houses in History	I	Seven League	(Associate: Paul Rotha)	H. M. Nieter	25/11/46	1,780	Made for the Ministry of Education. Changes in architecture between the 13th century and today. Part of Visual Unit.
House That Jack Built, The	T	Crown	Alexander Shaw	Graham Wallace	18/10/46	850	Monthly release for November. Made for the Ministry of Works. Boys from 17 counties who have left school and are apprenticed to builders working on council houses.
How to Cook Fish	NT I	Films of Gt. Britain	Andrew Buchanan	Andrew Buchanan	25/2/46	988	Made for the Ministry of Food.
Indian Background	T & NT	New Realm	—	—	16/9/46	833	Compilation for India Office, Describing the gradual transition from the old methods of agriculture and industry.
It Began on the Clyde	T & NT	Greenpark	R. Keene	Ken Annakin	18/2/46	1,412	Made for the Department of Health for Scotland. Known as the Clyde Basin experiment. The utilization of the Emergency Service Hospitals to deal with cases of war fatigue in industry.
It Might Be You	T & NT	Crown	Basil Wright	Michael Gordon	21/1/46	1,255	Monthly release for January, 1946. A reminder to all road users to take more care and follow the rules of the Highway Code.
Low Sugar Content, Jam Making	I	Films of Gt. Britain	Andrew Buchanan	Andrew Buchanan	Not yet fixed	1,000	Made for the Ministries of Food and Education.
Man One Family	OO	Ealing Studios	Sidney Cole	Ivor Montagu	8/1/46	1,551	An exposure of the fallacy of the German race myth.
Milk from Grange Hill Farm	I	Basic	R. K. Neilson-Baxter (Assoc.: Edgar Anstey)	J. B. Napier Bell	Not yet fixed	1,043	This silent film is part of the 'Local Study' Visual Unit. Made for the Ministry of Education.
Myra Hess	NT	Crown	Basil Wright	—	2/1/46	864	Playing the First Movement of Beethoven's Sonata in F Minor, Op. 57 (Appassionata).
Modern Guide to Health	T	Halas Batchelor	J. Halas	—	21/1/47	820	Monthly release for January, 1947. Made for the Ministry of Health and Central Council for Health Education. (Cartoon film.)
Near Home	I	Basic	R. K. Neilson-Baxter (Assoc.: Edgar Anstey)	K. Mander	Not yet fixed	2,224	This film is part of the Ministry of Education Visual Unit on Local Studies.
North-East Corner	MT	Greenpark	Ralph Keene (Associate: Edgar Anstey)	John Eldridge	Not yet fixed	2,015	One of the Pattern of Britain series.
Now It Can Be Told	T OO	RAF/FU re-edited by Exploitation	E. Baird	E. Baird	7/2/47	6,203	A film about the British and the Maquis. English theatrical distribution of this film under the title of <i>School for Danger</i> .
Old Wives' Tales	NT	Halas Batchelor	J. Halas	—	15/3/46	698	Made for the Ministry of Health in collaboration with the Central Council for Health Education. (Cartoon.)

Pacific Hitch-hike	T & NY	Films of Fact	Paul Rotha	Peter Hennessy	—	—	1,271	Made for the Admiralty. A reporter is shown travelling across the Pacific by various methods with the Fleet Mail—and life in an Aircraft-Carrier.
Penicillin in Medical Practice	I	Realist	John Taylor	Jane Massey	—	Not yet fixed	2,858	Made for the Ministry of Health. Available in 16 mm. Kodachrome only. (Footage reckoned in 35 mm. terms for running time.) For specialized audiences.
Personnel Selection in the British Army (Report from Britain No. 3)	OO	Shell	Edgar Anstey (Associate: Basil Wright)	Geoffrey Bell	—	22/5/46	8,700	A detailed study of the technique of officer selection.
Pool of Contentment	I	Public Relationship	Richard Massingham	Richard Massingham	—	4/11/46	1,265	Made for HM Treasury. A film for users of a typing pool.
Portuguese Editors' Tour	OOO	Movietone	—	—	15/11/46	—	1,678	Special coverage of the Tour made for overseas distribution only.
Potato Growing	I	Films of Gt. Britain	Andrew Buchanan	Andrew Buchanan	—	26/6/46	1,685	Made for the Ministry of Agriculture. A film for farmers.
Potteries in the Gold Coast	NT	Exploitation	—	—	—	21/10/46	800	One of the series about life in the Gold Coast.
Railwaymen, The	I	Crown	Alexander Shaw	Graham Wallace	—	Not yet fixed	2,045	Made for the Ministry of Transport. One of a film series about jobs.
Scabies, 1946	I	Merlin	—	R. Carruthers	—	Not yet fixed	2,220	Re-edited version of the film made in 1941 for the Ministry of Health.
Seed of Prosperity	NT	Campbell Harper	(Associate: Edgar Anstey)	Alan Harper	—	1/7/46	1,735	Made for the Department of Agriculture for Scotland. The story of Scottish Seed Potatoes.
Shaping the Future (long version)	I	Gryphon	Donald Taylor	—	—	6/6/46	1,352	One of the post-war career series. Presenting conditions and prospects in the building trade.
Shaping the Future (short version)	T	Gryphon	Donald Taylor	—	22/4/46	—	975	A shortened version of the above film used as a monthly release for April.
Stomach Worms in Sheep	I	Films of Gt. Britain	Andrew Buchanan	Andrew Buchanan	—	21/8/46	1,750	Made for the Ministry of Agriculture. A film for farmers.
Story of Omolo	NT	Crown	Basil Wright	—	—	26/6/46	779	A Kenya villager learns the scientific principles of agriculture at Bukura College.
Tea from Nyasaland	NT	Crown	Basil Wright	Kingston-Davies	—	19/9/46	797	Story of tea-growing in East Africa and its shipment to England.
Teaching	I	Merlin	Michael Hankinson	Roger MacDougall	—	14/11/46	2,248	One of the post-war career series. Produced for Ministry of Education.
Telephone Cable Jointing	I	Films of Gt. Britain	Andrew Buchanan	Andrew Buchanan	—	Not yet fixed	1,912	Post Office training film No. 1.
This Is China	T	Verity	Julian Wintle	—	22/7/46	—	775	Monthly release for July. (Compilation.) Tells of China's old age struggle for freedom—her long fight against the Japanese and her plans for reconstruction.
Town Meeting of the World	T	Crown	Basil Wright	Graham Wallace	18/3/46	—	1,046	Monthly release for March. Based on extracts taken from recordings of Mr Attlee's opening speech at the first session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.
Turn It Out	T	Greenpark	Ken Annakin	Ken Annakin	21/10/46	—	913	Made for the PM's Office. Monthly release for October. Intended to show the present production position to people in Britain.
Twenty-Four Square Miles	I	Basic	R. K. Neilson-Baxter	K. Mander	—	21/11/46	3,763	An analysis of life in the country in this area.
Typing Technique	I	Public Relationship	R. Massingham	M. Law	—	30/9/46	2,123	Made for HM Treasury. A training film in typing technique.
This Is Britain Series	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	This series is primarily intended for distribution overseas and theatrical home. Each issue usually contains three items. Contains: (1) Cambridge Auto-sexing breeds of poultry; (2) Photo-elastic Technique in industrial research; (3) Sadler's Wells Ballet School.
TIB No. 6	OO T	Merlin	Michael Hankinson	—	Not yet fixed	—	1,031	(1) Automatic ticket machines on the LPTB; (2) Open-cast Coal; (3) Re-stocking the Thames.
TIB No. 7	OO T	Merlin	Michael Hankinson	—	Not yet fixed	—	1,100	(1) Navigational Radar; (2) Folding boats; (3) Research in Wireworm control.
TIB No. 8	OO T	Merlin	Michael Hankinson	—	Not yet fixed	—	1,037	(1) Safety Precautions in London's Omnibus Service; (2) New Designs in Agricultural Machinery; (3) Asdic for the Herring Fleet.
TIB No. 9	OO T	Merlin	Michael Hankinson	—	Not yet fixed	—	964	(1) Tugs; (2) Helidon; (3) Furs.
TIB No. 10	OO T	Merlin	Michael Hankinson	—	Not yet fixed	—	1,063	
Way From Germany	T	Crown	Basil Wright	—	—	—	1,003	The story of the problem of displaced persons. Compilation by Terry Trench; monthly release for June.
West Africa Was There	OOO	Movietone News	—	—	—	15/3/46	990	Specially made for distribution in West Africa showing the part their troops played in the war.
Winter Milk	I	World Wide	James Carr	Clifford Dymont	—	13/9/46	1,478	Made for the Ministry of Agriculture. A film for farmers on the advantage of planning for winter milk production.
Worker and Warfront No. 18	NT	Films of Fact	Paul Rotha	—	—	5/1/46	992	Last issue of this monthly magazine for factories. Superseded by Britain Can Make It.
Your Children and You	I	Realist	Alexander Shaw and John Taylor	Brian Smith	—	11/9/46	2,567	Made for the Ministry of Health. Intended to help parents of the under fives.

TITLE	PRODUCTION UNIT	DIRECTOR	GOVERNMENT DEPT.	RELEASE DATE	NOTES
Briquette Making	Film Traders	Hollering	Ministry of Fuel and Power	January 17th	
Diphtheria No. 6	Concanen	Derrick de Marney	Ministry of Health	January 31st	
Influenza	Public Relationship	R. Massingham	Ministry of Health	February 13th	
Spare the Hot Water	Merton Park	A. T. Dinsdale	Ministry of Fuel and Power	February 25th	
Family Allowances	Film Traders	Hollering	Ministry of National Insurance	March 1st	
Eastern Mail Call	Merton Park	J. Rogers	War Office	March 7th	
Domestic Workers	Concanen	Derrick de Marney	Ministry of Labour	March 11th	Re-issue
Only Good News	Concanen	D. de Marney	War Office	April 25th	
Staggered Holidays	Concanen	D. de Marney	Ministry of Labour	May 2nd	
Blood Banks	Brunner Lloyd	M. Lloyd	Ministry of Health	May 13th	
Diphtheria No. 7	Concanen	Derrick de Marney	Ministry of Health	May 20th	
Increase the Harvest	Anglo-Scottish	A. Squire	Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries	May 27th	
Come Back Alive	Public Relationship	R. Massingham	Ministry of Transport	June 3rd	
Hospital Car Service	Crown	Nora Dawson	Ministry of Health	June 13th	
Bags and Bones	Brunner Lloyd	M. Lloyd	Ministry of Supply	June 18th	
Agricultural Holiday Camps	Public Relationship	R. Massingham	Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries	July 1st	
Odd Ode 'C'	Concanen	Derrick de Marney	Ministry of Transport	July 8th	
Women's Land Army	Anglo-Scottish	A. Squire	Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries	July 18th	
Export or Die	Halas Batchelor	J. Halas	Board of Trade	August 4th	
Employment of Disabled Persons	Concanen	D. de Marney	Ministry of Labour	August 15th	
Brickmakers	Elwiss	—	Ministry of Labour	August 19th	
Up the Potatoes	Anglo-Scottish	A. Squire	Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries	August 26th	
Join the Army	Larkins	W. Larkin	War Office	August 29th	
Odd Ode 'B'	Concanen	Derrick de Marney	Ministry of Transport	September 5th	Distributed by Pathé only.
Diphtheria 8	Concanen	D. de Marney	Ministry of Health	September 9th	
Per Ardua	Crown	Noel Arthur	Air Ministry	September 19th	

Resettlement Advice Service	Merton Park	Max Munden	Ministry of Labour	September 26th	Re-issue.
Old Age Insurance	Merlin	A. H. Luff	Ministry of National Insurance	October 3rd	
Who'll Help the Hospitals	Merlin	A. H. Luff	Ministry of Labour	October 10th	
Join the Navy	Concanen	Derrick de Marney	Admiralty	November 4th	Re-issue.
Watch the Fuel Watcher	Elwiss	— Elwiss	Ministry of Fuel and Power	November 11th	
Paper Publicity	Crown	Gerry Bryant	Board of Trade	November 21st	
RAF	Concanen	Derrick de Marney	Air Ministry	November 25th	Re-issue.
Post Haste	Public Relationship	R. Massingham	GPO	December 6th	
Highway Code	Concanen	D. de Marney	Ministry of Transport	December 9th	
King's Men	Larkins	W. Larkin	War Office	December 16th	
Keys of Heaven	Halas Batchelor	J. Halas	PM's Office	December 23rd	

COLONIAL FILM UNIT

TITLE	LENGTH feet	REMARKS	TITLE	LENGTH feet	REMARKS
Colonial Cine-Magazine No. 4	994	Sound. Contains three items: (1) London. University Football Match. (2) London. Colonial Film unit leaves for West Africa. (3) Leather workers in Accra.	On Patrol	300	Silent. In 16 mm. only. The story of the capture of a thief by a local African policeman.
Colonial Cine-Magazine No. 5	930	(1) London. Colonial Athletics. (2) London. Model Engineering. (3) Gold Coast. Infant Welfare Clinic.	Silver Jubilee of the Alake of Abeokuta	675	Sound. The Alake's celebrations in Abeokuta, Nigeria.
Deck Chair	348	Sound. Silent. In 16 mm. only. A man's struggle with a recalcitrant deck chair.	Swollen Shoot	937	Silent. In 16 mm. Kodachrome. This film was made to assist the campaign against the Swollen Shoot disease in Cocoa.
English Village	2,592	Sound. An African's tour of a village.	Teddy Bears	284	Sound. The film was edited from material shot in Australia showing young bears at play.
Fight Tuberculosis in the Home	2,700	Sound. A simple film to show how by sensible conduct and precautionary measures the disease may be prevented from spreading. The film was produced in West Africa.	Victory March, West Africa	1,866	Sound. Version of Victory Parade with the activities of the West Africans in more detail.
Home to West Africa	602	Sound. The return of African troops to their homes in Nigeria and Gold Coast.	Victory March, East Africa	998	Sound. As above, but dealing in this case with East Africa.
Keepers of the Peace	480	Silent. In 16 mm. only. Made in Northern Rhodesia, this film shows the training of African Police there.	Victory March, Middle East	985	Sound. As above, but dealing with Middle East.
Local Native Councils	360	Silent. In 16 mm. only. Showing the public services provided by the Local Native Councils.	Victory Parade	1,982	Sound. Colonial troops arrive for the Victory Parade—are seen in camp—at a tea party at the Colonial Office—at the Derby—in Edinburgh—in London and in the March Past in the Mall.
			Victory March, Far East	900	Sound. Dealing with contingent from the Far East.
			Weaving in Togoland	1,930	Sound.
			Welcome Home	706	Sound. The return of African troops to Gold Coast.

FILMS ACQUIRED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES

TITLE	DISTRIBUTION	PRODUCTION UNIT	LENGTH feet	REMARKS
FILMS ACQUIRED FROM THE BRITISH COUNCIL				
Cambridge	—	Everyman. Produced: Lewis Frank Wallace. Directed: Richard Massingham	2,245	
Each for All	—	Verity Films. Directed: Montgomery Tully	936	
English Criminal Justice	—	Greenpark. Produced: Ralph Keene. Directed: Ken Annakin	1,939	
Farmer's Boy	—	Greenpark. Produced: Ralph Keene. Directed: Peter Price	1,404	
General Election	—	Technique. Directed: Ronald Riley	1,838	
Papworth Village Settlement	—	World Wide. Produced, Directed: James Carr	1,815	
Routine Job	—	Merlin Films. Produced: Michael Hankinson. Directed: Gilbert Gunn	2,049	
St Paul's Cathedral	—	Merton Park Production. Directed: James E. Rogers	1,353	
This is Britain No. 1	—	Merlin Films. Produced: Michael Hankinson	835	
This is Britain No. 2	—	Merlin Films. Produced: Michael Hankinson	1,043	
Great Game	—	Verity Films. Produced: Reg. Groves. Directed: Reg. Groves	2,738	
Learning to Live	OO	Merton Park Production. Directed: H. Purcell	1,323	
Macbeth	OO	Verity Films. Produced: Sydney Box. Directed: Henry Cass	1,456	
New Mine	—	GB Instructional	1,589	
Picture Paper	—	Horizon Film Unit. Directed: Max Munden	1,781	
This is Britain No. 3	T OO	Merlin Films. Produced: Michael Hankinson	966	
This is Britain No. 4	T OO	Merlin Films. Produced: Michael Hankinson	990	
This is Britain No. 5	T OO	Merlin Films. Produced: Michael Hankinson	989	
We of the West Riding	—	Greenpark. Produced: Ralph Keene. Directed: Ken Annakin	2,086	
FILMS ACQUIRED FROM THE AIR MINISTRY				
Now It Can Be Told (long version)	OO	RAF/FU. Produced, Directed: E. Baird	8,031	
FILMS ACQUIRED FROM THE WAR OFFICE				
Palestine Police	I	Produced by No. 1 Army Film and Photographic Unit	1,627	One of the post-war career series.
Driver Wanted	I	Verity Films	2,112	One of the post-war career series.
Engineering in War and Peace	I	AKS	2,015	
Food Manufacture	I	World Wide (Graham Cutts)	2,495	
Hospital Team	I	Verity	2,440	
Town and Country Planning	I	National Interest Productions	950	One of the ABCA magazines
FILMS ACQUIRED FROM THE NATIONAL FILM BOARD OF CANADA				
Cattle Country	NT	Educational Unit	—	
Canadian Wheat Story	NT	Educational Unit	—	
Out of the Ruins	NT	Nicholas Read	1,056	Made in conjunction with UNRRA
Peace Builders	NT	—	942	
Music in the Wind	NT	—	900	
This is Our Canada	NT	—	1,870	
Trees that Reach the Sky	NT	—	—	
FILMS ACQUIRED FROM INFORMATION FILMS OF INDIA				
District Officer	NT	Producer: Ezra Mir. Director: K. Villiers	1,152	
Our Northern Cousins	NT	Producer: Ezra Mir. Director: Roop K. Shorey	1,020	
Palmyrah	NT	Producer: Ezra Mir. Director: K. Subrahmanyam	840	
MISCELLANEOUS FILMS ACQUIRED				
Duckbill Loader	I	British Movietone News	4,480	Acquired from the Ministry of Fuel and Power.
Soil Nutrients	I	Realist Film Unit. Directed by Brian Smith	1,792	Silent 16 mm. only.
There's a Future In It	I	World Wide. Directed by Mary Francis	2,000	Acquired from ICI
National Capital	NT	Commonwealth of Australia Production	2,022	Acquired from the Cotton Board.
Can We Be Rich?	NT	Film Producers Guild. Director: Cecil Musk	1,732	Acquired from the Australian Department of Information.
The Hurdler	I	—	1,312	
The Runner No. 1	I	—	1,000	Acquired for the Ministry of Education. The John Bett's Sportsmen All Series.
The Runner No. 2	I	—	1,000	do. do. do.
The Runner No. 3	I	—	1,000	do. do. do.
High and Long Jump	I	—	1,000	do. do. do.
Javelin Thrower and Pole Vault	I	—	1,000	do. do. do.
Discus and Hammer Thrower	I	—	1,000	do. do. do.
The Boxer	I	—	1,000	do. do. do.
The Walker	I	—	1,000	do. do. do.
The Rower	I	—	1,000	do. do. do.
The Sportswoman	I	—	1,000	do. do. do.
The Yachtsman	I	—	1,000	do. do. do.
Putting the Shot	I	—	1,000	do. do. do.

**IF THE FILM IS TO APPEAL TO THE CHILD
WE MUST KNOW WHAT THE CHILD LIKES—
MAYBE WE CAN LEARN SOMETHING FROM THIS ARTICLE**

ON CHILDREN'S FILM APPRAISAL

By

ELLIOTT JAQUES

OF THE TAVISTOCK INSTITUTE OF HUMAN RELATIONS

LAST MONTH'S issue of DNL contained a review of three children's Road Safety films—*Puddle Muddle Riddle*, *Playing in the Road*, and the *Ballad of the Battered Bicycle*—made by the Petroleum Films Bureau. The same issue carried a brief description of an experiment in getting the reactions of school children to these films. The children's reactions were just the reverse of the reviewer's, indicating the discrepancy which often exists between what an adult thinks a child will like and what the child really likes. In making children's films, however, it is the child's view that counts. How are we to assess this? Perhaps the tentative results from this film appraisal project may be suggestive.

Methods of Testing

The appraisal techniques used were described in some detail in the previous article in DNL. Briefly these were to have small groups of children carry out certain spontaneous activities before and after each film. One group did chalk drawings, another group made up stories, another group made up games. Then, a day later, all of the children wrote short essays about the films.

The notion behind the use of these techniques was that if audience reaction research is to be meaningful it must tap some of the underlying attitudes of the audience as well as the more conscious reactions obtainable by essays and questionnaires. The drawings, story-telling and play techniques were therefore selected to provide an opportunity for spontaneous reactions to emerge in their full richness.

Results

The results demonstrated that the essays did give a useful rank ordering of the films. There was, however, a good deal of repetitious material in them, and a tendency to tell what the children felt their teachers would expect. Scoring and evaluating these essays was a time-consuming and laborious task in relation to the amount of material available from them.

Of the spontaneous techniques the play-groups turned out to be by far the most useful. What in fact happened in these groups was that the children very readily played out on their own initiative various characters and incidents in the films. Observation and proper interpretation of the content of these games gave a significant picture of the kind of impact which the films had made. For example, certain incidents and characters were taken seriously and played out enthusiastically, others were mimicked and caricatured and debunked.

Significant Omission

As one good illustration of this the case of the final sequence in *Puddle Muddle Riddle* can be cited. In the film, after an amusing fantasy portrayal of what would happen if there were no satisfactory traffic regulations the scene changes rapidly and shows a group of what the film calls 'sensible people' sitting round a committee room explaining to the children why our own traffic rules should be obeyed. This sequence was significantly omitted from the children's spontaneous play. When it was suggested that this scene might be played out the 'sensible people' were mercilessly lampooned. 'Sensible' was defined as meaning dull, and the children not involved in caricaturing the 'sensible people', joined in the fun by gibing at those who were.

Different Schools

The films were shown in three different schools, and the reactions of the children in the different schools varied considerably. In one where the children were allowed a good deal of freedom and the relationship with adult teachers was secure there was much fuller enjoyment and freer criticism of the films than in the school where the relationship with the teachers was based more on fear of discipline. The children from the freer school atmosphere resented strict adults in the films far more than the other children who felt that strict adults 'must be right.'

Minor errors which would be missed by adults were deftly picked out by the children. For example, it was pointed out in one of the films where a motor car nearly ran over a child, that it was not the child's fault at all but the driver's because he was driving too near the centre of the road. Similarly, things which were never intended were easily read into the films. Some children, for example, suggested that the films taught new ways of doing tricks on a bicycle and of playing games in the road.

Future Script-Writers

The children had a wealth of ideas for film stories on road safety which emerged in the story-telling test, and made highly constructive criticisms and suggestions. The teachers also had important suggestions to make, and it was clear that they resented somewhat the idea that films for schools should be made without reference to those who would have to use them.

Child characters were liked in the films, as were adults who played with the children. On the other hand strict, or even serious or sensible adults seemed to stir up rather deep-seated anxieties and these incidents and scenes in the films were deeply repressed.

These reactions of children to these Road Safety films—the taking-up of incorrect details, the differences in interpretation from those intended, criticisms of weaknesses in the films, the excellent ideas and constructive suggestions—all seem to indicate a need for the consideration of audience reaction research as an organic part of the process of film production, based on the notion of allowing consumer participation from the very beginning. In the case of teaching films for children this would involve opportunity for face to face contact between those making the films and groups of teachers and children, at all stages of production—treatment, script, shooting and cutting.

Such producer-consumer collaboration would guarantee greater consumer satisfaction with the end product, and provide an endless source of stimulation and enthusiasm for film-makers.

The appraisal work referred to was carried out under the auspices of PFB by a team composed of the author, M. Silberman, H. Phillipson, W. E. Moore and H. Marven from the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, and D. Boulting and G. Bennell from Film Centre.

FIRST INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF DOCUMENTARY FILMS AT EDINBURGH

Aug 31st—Sept 7th, 1947

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Monday-Saturday, Sept 1st-6th

2.30 and 8

Admission 2s 6d

THE FIRST OF A SERIES ON FILM FACILITIES IN THE PROVINCES

No 1—MANCHESTER

By MERVYN REEVES

MANCHESTER enjoys something of reputation in cultural matters, notably music and the drama. This is a brief account of what it is doing for the art which is little older than its outer suburbs.

The Kinematograph Year Book lists 133 cinemas in Manchester and its contiguous boroughs, Salford and Stretford. This figure must suffice—although one notices the omission of at least two 'palaces' where important films may be caught on the point of deserting the city's repertoire. Of the 133, twenty-four are owned by the three main circuits, and a number of the remainder by smaller locally-owned circuits. Total seating capacity may be estimated at 100,000, roughly one seat for every ten persons. Birmingham and Merseyside, two areas with comparable populations, are recorded as having 102 and 106 cinemas respectively, which suggests a relatively heavy concentration in Manchester. We certainly feel no shortage of the conventional type of picture house; the lack is one of enterprise in programme policy.

No Stravinsky!

As elsewhere, the routine commercial feature makes its much-heralded tour of the city's cinemas, except for occasional commercial discords like the early Orson Welles films, which sneaked away; nor were we allowed to see the Stravinsky sequence in *Fantasia*! Apart from the central circuit cinemas and their suburban satellites, double-feature programmes are uncommon. Most of the suburban cinemas run a single feature and 'full supporting programme'—the news and one or two shorts. The last are often chosen as a contribution to neither quota nor culture. In fact, it seems, they are frequently not deliberately chosen at all but simply thrown in as a prelude to the feature. And although the results are rarely downright offensive, it is surprising that the opportunity to practise the art of programme building and demonstrate the versatility of the film medium, should be so widely ignored. The banality of supporting programmes is not, of course, peculiar to Manchester, but one could have hoped that the city's one specialized cinema would bear fruit elsewhere in the locality.

For the 'Tatler Theatre', over many years, has exhibited almost every factual film of merit, providing the subject matter has had a reasonably wide appeal. Only one type of film, I'm told, is barred—the ones which deem it necessary to underline, verbally, the moral of a film, catch you by the ears, and adopt a coercive attitude!

Local restrictions

This enterprise apart, we have no cinema which can justly be called progressive. To date, there are no regular showings of Continental films and no repertory cinemas worthy of the name. Nowhere, that is, where the work of people like

Reed, Donskoi, Carné, Ford, Rotha, Eldridge—and your favourite comedian—is consistently given precedence over that of the industry's less talented personalities. So far, commerce has not seen fit to fulfil this need; but it is clearly a provision of the greatest educational and cultural importance and, incidentally, an essential complement to the work of the Arts Council in other fields. We hope that the City Corporation may feel its responsibilities in the matter. Although quick to use the film as a means of encouraging civic consciousness (they commissioned Rotha's *A City Speaks*), the Corporation has been more timid in its attitude towards the wider potentialities of films in the community. There was, for example, the regrettable and unprecedented restriction imposed last year upon the exhibition of all 35-mm films, and any 16-mm films of more than 2,400 ft., in the Corporation's own Central Library Theatre. Thus the civic film itself is excluded; and we can only hope that this measure will prove to be an isolated concession to those who persist in estimating cinema exclusively by to-day's box-office returns. As for the feared competition which inspired the restriction—the theatre holds less than one-half of one per cent of the city's total population.

Film Societies

The locality has been fortunate in the work of its voluntary societies. The oldest of these is the Manchester and Salford Film Society, successor to the Salford Workers' Film Society, founded in 1930. As England's first exhibiting society it was inadvertently assisted by the banning of *Storm Over Asia* early in its career, and over a period of seventeen years it has shown 500 noteworthy films. Membership now stands at 450, and its activities include lectures and discussions in addition to standard film shows held on Sunday afternoons in the winter months. Manchester owes a lot to this pioneering Society and particularly to Reg Cordwell, its secretary for many years.

The Manchester Film Institute Society, inaugurated in 1934, has done similar work. For a period during the war it joined forces with the Manchester and Salford Society, both resuming separate operations in 1943. At that time the Film Institute Society had 124 members; it now has 1,150 and holds two performances of each monthly programme during the winter season, on a week-night—thanks to a sympathetic cinema manager. Prior to the war it had a flourishing schools group, about to be revived, and during recent years it has co-operated with the Extra-Mural Department of Manchester University in arranging a number of lectures on various aspects of the cinema.

These two societies between them have endeavoured to give every available film of artistic, social, or experimental interest at least one show-

ing in Manchester, with frequent revivals of the established classics. They are entitled to much of the credit for the reported proposal to devote one of the principal commercial cinemas in the city to Continental films.

Scientific Film Society

The most recently formed organization is the Manchester Scientific Film Society, dating from 1945. Rapid progress has been made and the membership is now 600. Half are school members for whom special films are provided. Demand for attendance at the junior section is so great that only a small proportion can be accommodated at present, and the Society is proposing to tour the programmes next season in order to reach the wider audience. Programmes lasting two hours (1½ hours for the juniors) have hitherto consisted of an assortment of scientific films, with informed commentary upon the subject-matter of at least one film. The success of these commentaries suggests that it will shortly be possible to devote a whole programme to one theme, and use the film increasingly as a means of provoking discussion.

Production

On the amateur production side we have the Manchester Film Society, which suspended activity during the war after 16 years of excellent work; its film *Miracles Still Happen* (1935), commemorating the centenary of the Manchester Children's Hospital, was the first amateur 35-mm sound film.

Film and Education

Finally there are the scholastic bodies, the Teachers' Screen Circle, and a number of school visual aid groups; the latter are spreading rapidly, as are film societies, throughout South Lancashire. The prolificacy of film groups here is eloquent enough. It is no longer simply a question of stimulating an interest in film but one of supplying the many growing points with worthy material and authoritative guidance.

Now that public education in this country is likely to be the most rewarding form of security in the atomic age, it is urgent that the film should make its full contribution—inside and outside the commercial cinema. Some would like to believe that, in Manchester, with the co-operation of the various film societies, and adult education bodies, the valuable assistance of the COI Regional Film Office, and—dare one hope—the sympathetic ear of the trade, we might be able to set the pace for this task. The area is sufficiently compact to avoid dissipation of effort and yet populous and varied enough to constitute a fair test of the power which is believed to lie in visual education.

From Pinewood—

THE FLITTING OF CROWN

—To Beaconsfield

A FEW months ago the Crown Film Unit migrated from the gaudy atmosphere of Pinewood to the more bucolic Beaconsfield.

The move was made with all that circumspect realism for which documentary film makers are so noted. First things first, and five experienced persons from the Unit were sent forth into Beaconsfield to take the lie of the land, to sift and sample all the possible premises and to choose one which would satisfy all the Unit's various capacities. Several places were recommended, but one by one, after very close study, they were pronounced unsuitable. This was too big, that was too palatial. Until at last, when several days of unceasing application had produced no satisfaction and all seemed lost, a diminutive, ancient, amiable place was found: by name, THE OLD HARE.

The basic problem solved, there was little else to worry about. As far as the studio was concerned, we had all seen the plans—nothing flamboyant but very workmanlike, homely. A stage of small but decorous dimensions, theatres, canteen, vaults, offices and the usual offices—everything was there, on the plan. Anything else we wanted we had only to ring up the appropriate Government department, the Ministry of Works or the Ministry of Supply or the Central Office of Information or the Treasury and—well, in twelve months we have already got a most wonderful road. It does not quite run from the gate to the doorstep, because the bit by the gate is not finished and we have not got a doorstep yet. When in a few weeks' time the Ministerial cars sweep over its clean, smooth concrete, the civil servants will have a decided feeling (until they get to the end of the road) that they are getting somewhere.

But, in point of fact, the Crown film unit when it left Pinewood got nowhere but into a wilderness. There is much, on the other hand, in this situation of having no studio, not even an outside lot, to brighten the eyes of the older (but never ageing) documentarians. There are many who think that even the Blackheath studio, small as it was, was a lapse from purity; to them the idea of Pinewood, with its five vast stages, was anathema. To them, the best documentary films were made, and will always be made by a man and a dog and a Newman Sinclair.

That is very much the situation in which Crown finds itself now. Wistful directors look out of the Beaconsfield windows and wonder whether they could lay tracks along the concrete road and shoot at night and then post synch, in order to get that long trolley shot which is so essential to the script, and which would be so simple if only they were still at Pinewood. Then someone suggests soundproofing the paint shop which is twelve feet high and roughly the size of a large drawing-room. If that were done, we wouldn't have to post synch, but then again, though there would probably be room for the camera, there certainly would not be room for the blimp. Then someone really bright suggests acrimoniously that if So-and-so must have that tracking shot,

why not turn it into a panning shot, build the set in five-foot sections, shoot in the lavatory and then join all the bits together? And of course, anyone who opposes any suggestion whatsoever, no matter how inane, is looked upon as a rank saboteur.

So this state of studiolessness may turn out to be all for the best. It may be embittering, just at the moment, to think that we were able to shut ourselves away in a large studio in order to photograph a world war, and now, when we are asked to photograph nothing more concrete than the Future or Plans for this and that, there is no studio space in which to fake anything—but in the end, who knows, the effect of these difficulties may be most salutary. Critics not manually engaged in the arts insist that the best art is turned out by biting off more than you can chew, by cracking the hardest nuts. It may be so.

Perhaps documentarians, by facing appalling difficulties again, will learn to face the facts of life, too. Perhaps we shall be so hard put to it to fake, lie and cheat, that we shall resign ourselves to telling the truth for a change. Since circumstances have decided that we cannot go on in the old way we *could* make up our minds to have a clean sweep of all the junk which has accumulated round the word 'documentary'.

No more jovial pub scenes. No more honest workmen pushing back their cloth caps to reveal an honest forehead. No more rugged chauffeurs of the sky leaning over the clouds, their eyes as innocent as the filtered clouds themselves. No more affectionate, kindly, unquarrelling British families. In fact, no more of the documentary cliché types. They are all so damned nice.

What a set of films we could make, without a stage, without settings, without a crane, about real people—normal people who are the normal admixture of pleasantness and unpleasantness, laziness and industry, crookedness and honesty, superstition and scepticism.

In spite of the Central Office of Information's well-known passion for the truth at all costs, we, as proud documentary film-makers, would rather tell a varnished lie. But if we don't get our studio quickly, we may have to fall obediently into line with official wishes and tell, in a new sort of film, the unvarnished truth.

HAYES SCIENTIFIC FILM SOCIETY

A REPORT received from this film society says that monthly shows are now given to audiences of about 110. They held an 'audience reaction' test at the April show in which the viewers were asked to rate the films as 'excellent', 'good', 'fair' or 'poor'. Shell Film Unit's *Approach to Science* topped the list with 51 per cent 'excellent' and 48 per cent 'good'. Other films with high ratings were *Stairway to Heaven* (on elementary astronomy) and *Drawings that Walk and Talk* (a composite history of the cartoon).

NORTHERN COUNTIES CHILDREN'S CINEMA COUNCIL

THE NCCCC have held their third annual general meeting. They find that their experimental Junior Club has been a success but they stress the need for more satisfying films. *Treasure Island* and *Tawny Pippit* were very popular and there is an assured demand for films of any of the children's 'classics'.

The report makes a complaint about the impossibility of guaranteeing the complete success of any educational film show—faulty projectors, bad prints, damaged films, arbitrary vetos between library and exhibitors—all these combine to make it most doubtful if any particular film will be able to be shown at the point at which it is most necessary in any given 'teaching' project.

The NCCCC also shows French films for grammar school pupils, scientific films, films on the arts, and films for educationalists. They reach a wide audience and are doing a worth-while job.

ADULT EDUCATION AT STOKES HOUSE

A NEW adult college is opening at Stoke House, Stoke Hammond, Bletchley, Bucks, in August. This is a private venture in continued education and has no support from the local authority except in good wishes. The initiative has come entirely from Mr Noel Heath, who as Wing Commander inspecting a number of RAF educational schemes in this country during the war, realized that there was a great demand for more learning, particularly in cultural subjects. With this in view, he has now bought Stoke House in order to hold short courses in art, music, drama and handicrafts. An attempt will be made to provide an outlet for self-expression, so that when students leave they will either want to come back again or they will go home determined to benefit by their introduction to creative leisure.

Stoke House is opening on August 27th with a week's conference for teachers, and for others who are interested, on *Understanding the Adolescent*. Various subjects will be discussed and they will all have some bearing on this problematic aspect of education.

The speakers will be The Rt Hon H. Graham White on Human Relationships in Industry; H. A. T. Child on Vocational Guidance; Alec Clifton-Taylor on Good and Bad Taste; A. A. Dams on Poetry and Drama; Lionel Gamlin on How to be a Good-Humoured Teacher; C. Handley-Read on Self-expression through Painting; Dr E. Graham Howe on the Art of Healing; G. A. Lyward on the Religious Difficulties of the Adolescent; E. J. D. Radclyffe on the Moods of the Adolescent; John Wales on the Scope and Limits of Visual Education; Commander E. Whitehead on the Transition from School to Work.

On August 28th the Central Office of Information will show some educational films, including it is hoped, *Children of the City* (the film about juvenile delinquency in Scotland).

Particulars of this conference may be obtained from Mr C. S. D. Moore, the Director of Studies at Stoke House; his address is Dane Court School, Blandford, Dorset.

FLIGHTS OF FANCY

By

R. E. WHITEHALL

THE production of films is a remarkable business. Nothing can ever be taken for granted, as the many critics of the wartime developments in the French cinema are now discovering. The people who attacked the French excursion into an unreal world of witchcraft and magic as 'decadent' and 'unhealthy', are now discovering that one does not necessarily have to degenerate under foreign occupation in order to dally with dream desire within the confines of a rather frail edifice of celluloid.

The flight from reality is a too-frequent phenomenon in the post-war British cinema not to be disturbing. Disturbing in that the types of subjects now in the offing would not have looked out of place on the production schedules of the major British studios during the middle 'thirties. The same ponderous historical subjects (some of them merely revivals of ideas not put into production during that period due to financial difficulties) appear now with a greater gloss and sheen, but with a complete lack of the sound common sense characterizing the great British films between 1939 and the present day and—remembering the early Asquith films, the Hitchcock productions, *The Edge of the World*, *Bank Holiday*, *The Citadel*, and a few other isolated examples—those of pre-war days also.

It is easier to get a balanced view of the airy flights of fancy on the part of our producers if one remembers the position in Italy, a country

where there is far more reason for an escapist trend, and the fact that Italian film-makers are increasingly turning to the theory that the ultimate aim of the cinema should be to provide something more than entertainment. The whole of post-war life in that broken country has been explored, at first through the semi-documentary, and now in humanistic terms.

Best Italian Film

Robert Rossellini, the finest exponent of ordinary emotions in a drab world since the Carné of *Quai des Brumes* and *Le Jour se Lève*, has followed *Rome Open City* and *Desiderio with Paise*, a bi-lingual film with a mixed Italian-American cast, dealing with the psychological influence of the Allies on the Italian civilian. The film has been hailed as the best ever to come from Italy. Rossellini, who insists on supervising his own films from script to screen is now working with Max Colpet on a film treating the minority problem.

This director is not an isolated example of the Italian cinema's awareness of modern problems—there are many others—yet it is rather curious that the first Italian film to reach this country since 1939 is an operatic film which might well have been made in the pre-war years. There is no accountable reason why *The Barber of Seville* should be given preference over far worthier

films which have not, at the moment of writing, been acquired for exhibition in this country.

Even Hollywood, the butt of the universe, has produced, during a season almost as barren as the dust-deserts of Oklahoma, post-war themes of vital importance, maltreated in *Till the End of Time*, intelligently handled in *The Best Years of Our Lives*.

There is the stuff of drama in reconstruction. If anyone doubts that, let them see what Jill Craigie did with *The Way We Live*, laying the problem fairly and squarely in the laps of the audience, providing no loophole for evasive rationalization. Miss Craigie's documentary had more dramatic impact than a dozen inoffensive little thrillers or polite drawing room comedies, more genuine cinema than will be found between the covers of Miss du Maurier's latest best-seller, and distribution comparable to that of the newest Continental masterpiece.

There are a whole set of new problems—social, economic, cultural, even political (Hollywood is preparing a quartet of films, *Crossfire*, *Gentleman's Agreement*, *Lights Out*, and *Earth and High Heaven*, all attacking racial prejudice either against Negro or Jew). Ealing, the most socially conscious of British studios, have completed *Frieda*, dealing with the difficulties of personal Anglo-German relationships at the present time, and are filming A. J. La Bern's extraordinary story, compressed within 24 hours, of small-time crooks in the East End of London. The Boulting Brothers are following *Thunder Rock* and *Fame is the Spur* with Graham Greene's *Brighton Rock*. Gainsborough have *Good Time Girl*, dealing with delinquency, and *Holiday Camp*, an unknown quantity from one of the best of the younger documentary directors, Ken Annakin, but elsewhere current films are aimed further and further away from reality. To visit a British studio today is rather like taking a trip to Madame Tussauds, all the great figures of the past century, particularly murderers, are there.

Now Blue Lagoon

The combination of Frank Launder and Sidney Gilliat once made two outstanding documents of lower middle-class life, followed by a satire in the tradition of Hogarth and Rowlandson. Now they are intent on filming H. de Vere Stacpoole's *Blue Lagoon*, a saga wherein the beautiful Miss Jean Simmons and some unknown Hollywood lad are cast away on a desert island.

With all too disconcerting frequency this desert island complex seems to be cropping up, as unhealthy in its way as the deliberate distortion or suppression of fact in the new Russian films, such as *The Vow*. There is no room for thesis films in the Russian manner (as *They Came to a City* only too well proves), but *The Best Years of Our Lives* illustrates that present-day problems can be treated in such a way as to combine enthusiastic audience reaction with wider and deeper searching into the moral and spiritual values of the modern world. Any film industry which is to be a living force must mirror the world of which it is part, expressing with vigorous simplicity the heart and mind of the nation. The roots of a film industry should be deep in the national culture.

Liu Ling, one of the Seven Worthies of the Bamboo Grove, wrote, in the third century, '... the affairs of this world appear but as so much duckweed on a river', a sentiment apparently adopted as a motto by far too many film producers.

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FILMS FOR THE ARMY:

THE WORK OF AKC

The Army Kinema Corporation, a civilian organization, was set up last year to continue the work done during the war by the Directorate of Army Kinematography at the War Office by the Army Kinema Service in the field, and by ENSA on the entertainment film side.

Supervision

The AKC is responsible for supervising the production, through civilian trade firms, of all training and instructional films for the army and for distributing and exhibiting the release prints when the films are finally approved. A typical release print order is for, say, 20 x 35 mm and 70 x 16 mm prints, though, of course, this varies with the type of film and the precise audience for whom it is intended. Prints are sent to AKC libraries (there are 13 in the UK and about 25 major libraries overseas, from Japan to West Africa and from Hamburg to East Africa) where they are held for issue on demand. A small number are earmarked for schools and training centres which have specialized film libraries of their own. Many army units have their own 16 mm. projector and films are issued to them by post or local delivery; in addition, all AKC district libraries have dual mobile 16mm projection equipments which serve units which for one reason or another have no projector of their own. There are over 120 of these equipments in the United Kingdom and over 300 overseas or in troopships. All AKC libraries have their own technical and administrative staff, and film repair and maintenance workshops.

Distribution

As well as handling training and instructional films for the army, the AKC rents, distributes and exhibits entertainment films. These are shown both in 35 mm (there are about 250 35 mm theatres operated by AKC all over the world) and in 16 mm. These entertainment films are obtained under the terms of the contractual agreements made by the AKC with the major British and American renters. The agreements guard civilian exhibitors' rights, and define what categories of soldiers' friends and relations may attend AKC shows. About 104 feature films are booked annually and are shown to army units large and small, wherever they may be. As the Treasury has now withdrawn the subsidy for entertainment for the Forces, the cost of providing these entertainment films has to be met from the box office receipts, which are fixed in agreement with War Office. The small and isolated units, whose need for entertainment is greatest, are catered for by an elaborate system of 16 mm mobile routings. AKC's aim is to give the soldier the best possible entertainment films at the cheapest prices whether he is in a big city in Germany or guarding a desert outpost.

General Interest

Many of the War Office Instructional films are of wide general interest; some have been reviewed from time to time in the DNL and in other Documentary trade journals. A number have been 'adopted' by the Central Film Library in the same way that the War Office has adopted films from COI and elsewhere, and these are available in the usual way from the CFL. To meet the many requests for copies of their films, the War Office have recently authorized the prints held in AKC libraries to be made available to approved civilian organizations at a hire charge of 5s. a reel a day (16 mm). Among these films are the ABCA Magazine series—10 minute films on current topics designed to serve as a basis for discussion—*Coal, Education, Town and Country Planning*, etc.; the Current Affairs Series including *Read All About it*, a three-reeler about the Press designed to show the difference between

news and views, and to show how a newspaper works; *Our Teeth*, which shows in an amusing and non-technical way why it is a good idea to keep one's teeth clean; *Best Feet Forward*, made for the ATS on the care of the feet; *Technique of Instruction in the Army*, already widely known outside the army as an effective aid in instructing the instructors; the eleven films of the Map Reading Series which, although dealing primarily with the use of the map from a military point of view, show details, in actuality and diagram, of conventional signs, contours, direction finding and so on. There are also a number of technical films like those on *Compression Ignition Engines* and on *Elementary Principles of MT Vehicles*.

Full details of these films can be obtained from the AKC libraries at York, Hounslow, Edinburgh, Salisbury, Belfast and Chester, or from Curzon Street House, London, W1.

NUCLEUS

Data and Seven-League Film Units have together founded an independent company to produce medical and biological films

The following examples of productions now in hand indicate the scope of this unit:—

- Studies in Human Lactation for doctors and midwives
- Lumbar Puncture in Infants for 5th year medical students
- Diagnosis of Threadworm Infestation for doctors
- Ocular Palsies for 2nd and 3rd year medical students
- Home Nursing Techniques for housewives

Directors: Jack Chambers Hans M Nieter D Phil Brian Stanford MRCS DMR FRPS
Nucleus Film Unit Limited 26 D'Arblay Street London W1

Denis Segaller has just returned from USA
he sends us this brief account of

AMERICAN LOCATION

DNL has asked me to write down some of my impressions of America. What shall I write about? I have come back absolutely saturated with impressions—mostly good ones! This 11-week trip of mine (April, May, and half of June) has been wonderful—one of the greatest and most delightful experiences I have ever had. (Or maybe that much is obvious anyhow.)

RMS *Queen Elizabeth* is breathtaking... and can take your appetite away, too. For an exquisitely uncomfortable sensation I can recommend seeing a film—any film—on board ship in a rough sea, with the screen pitching gently to and fro. The *Queen Elizabeth* has two fully equipped cinemas, with a daily change of programme—single feature—films such as *Johnnie O'Clock*, *Nicholas Nickleby*, *Margie* (which I rather went for) plus the usual short. This Modern Age's *Coal Crisis* went down extremely well with a somewhat cosmopolitan audience.

The purpose of my trip was to shoot certain processes in oil refining for the instructional *Refinery Series* I am making at Shell. One of my two chief refinery locations was at Dominguez, some twenty miles from Hollywood. So after two days in New York off I went to the West Coast.

I enjoyed Hollywood a lot. One of the things I liked about it was the pleasant cool, white architecture—nary an ugly building in sight—

and an air of spaciousness. Hollywood isn't a very clearly-defined geographical unit, but just a 'district' in the enormous sprawling mass of Los Angeles, bounded on the West and South by other districts known vaguely as Beverley Hills (where Shirley Temple lives) and Wilshire (one 'l' and no 't'), and on the North by the Santa Monica mountains, which are reminiscent of Italy and reputed to contain poisonous snakes.

'The Boulevard'—Hollywood Boulevard—is mainly shops—not as expensive as you'd think—and, of course, Sid Grauman's beautiful Chinese Theatre with hand- and footprints of many stars (including the Durrante schnozzle-print).

My shooting was all exterior work. Union minimum crew consisted of: cameraman (£23 a day), operator (about half that amount), assistant (can't remember his rate), and electrician (about £5 a day). These are full studio rates as there is no separate shorts agreement. The crew were grand to work with and turned in the best possible stuff.

We had our weather troubles, however. The Los Angeles district suffers from a fairly new climatic disease known locally as 'smog'. This is not unlike a London peasouper, only blue, not yellow; it is largely caused by the many new industrial plants which have sprung up in the area during the war years, plus, I suspect, some

sea mist blowing in from the Pacific. It tended to be very thick most mornings on location, and sometimes we had no sun until late afternoon. We also had considerable cloud and general overcast.

Shooting in and around oil refineries is an interesting but rather mucky business. Our feet sank in tar melted by the heat of the sun (when there was any sun), our hands and clothes got covered in oil and grease climbing up tanks and towers. I left my 'refinery suit' behind when the job was finished.

George Pal is at present making a series of Puppetoon Films in colour for Shell; I met him two or three times and was lucky enough to be shown round his studios. I was glad to learn something of his shooting methods and to examine his fascinating little puppets, which are models of craftsmanship. He uses a variety of animation techniques: changes of facial expression for example are produced by a series of heads, each with a peg registering into a hole in the neck.

I was also taken on to a couple of sets at Warners during rehearsals between takes. Much impressed by general air of efficiency and order yet at the same time a feeling of good humour.

Many units in Hollywood and elsewhere making documentary, instructional or 'commercial' films are operating entirely on 16 mm. Main reasons are: lower cost, and colour. Right now it is difficult or even impossible to obtain 35 mm. colour facilities for any non-theatrical productions, whereas on 16 mm. Kodachrome is readily available. 16 mm. shooting, editing, printing and optical facilities are much better organized on the whole than over here, and quality of show copies tends to be higher.

My other main location was at a refinery in Texas, near the Gulf Coast. Here by contrast we had a week of the most perfect shooting weather—sun (and was it hot?), brilliant blue sky and some wonderful cloud effects. I was told photographers come to the Gulf Coast from all over the USA to shoot clouds, and Hollywood even sends cameramen the 1,800 miles to get clouds for library material to be used for back-projection.

Everywhere I went folks were extremely hospitable and kind. I found Americans on the whole a friendly, informal and delightful people, and liked what I saw of the American way of life.

Everywhere, too, I found the greatest appreciation of British films. Not only are such British Shell films as *Distillation*, *Transfer of Power*, and *Hydraulics* acclaimed and widely used by the Shell organization in the USA, but these and other more recent British documentaries such as *Children's Charter*, *Your Children's Eyes*, etc. seem to be achieving great things in the schools and in other non-theatrical fields. (I would like to be able to say a lot more about this non-theatrical distribution set-up, but must plead limited knowledge. This I do know, that numerous small private firms seem to be hiring projectors and other visual aids apparatus to schools and youth clubs, and with these go a fair proportion of British documentaries. US educational bodies as a whole seem a whole lot more film-conscious than in this country.)

Nearly everyone I spoke to had seen and was enthusiastic about such films as *Brief Encounter*, *Henry V*, *Stairway to Heaven* (A Matter of Life and Death) and *This Happy Breed*. I saw *Great Expectations* playing to a full house of 6,500 in Radio City Music Hall in New York. It went down good and big: my two American friends declared it the best film they had ever seen.

THE HORIZON FILM UNIT

An Associate of the Film Producers Guild Ltd

A Unit of seven people who during the past two years have made twelve films for Government Departments and Industry, for informational or instructional purposes.

They specialize in, and are experienced in, the writing and film technique of helping to communicate people to each other in different aspects of citizenship.

THE HORIZON FILM UNIT

(PRODUCER: MAX MUNDEN)

GUILD HOUSE, UPPER ST. MARTIN'S LANE, W.C.2

CORRESPONDENCE about

FILMS ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT

From a Local Government PRO

DEAR SIR,

I was more than glad to see that space had been given to the article by Alec Spoor in the last issue of the DOCUMENTARY NEWS LETTER, and I must strongly support all he has written on the idea of films to explain the workings of local government to the people.

As a practising Public Relations Officer, I feel that the cinema, in furthering the cause of citizenship, can do much to combat the appalling apathy of the average citizen regarding matters of local public interest, an apathy of which the cinema is often accused of being the first cause!

There is no doubt that much of the social disorder apparent today is due to the fact that the sense of civic pride and native consciousness has lost its rightful place in our lives. In the old days of local government from the parish pump there was a great deal of the personal and intimate element linked with the townspeople's deliberations. Every name was known, almost every face, and sometimes even their private ambitions were common knowledge. The absence of many of the modern social services, administered by the Town Hall, particularly the public health and hospital services, called forth a continued application of the principles of neighbourliness and friendly co-operation. Many of the opportunities for the expression of these principles are withdrawn from our modern social order and, in depending to a great extent on the uninterrupted continuance of the services organized from the Town Hall, we have lost a great deal of our sense of dependence on each other, as neighbours and members of a community.

Social surveys have revealed that the majority of people are bound to any sort of code of ethics only by cobweb chains, by an inherent sense of decency, rather than a defined attitude to life. They remain generally out of focus and bewildered, and it is this aimlessness which breeds apathy and, let us be honest, is a considerable factor in filling the cinemas. Of the multitude of regular cinema-goers, how many are 'choosy', and how many go out of sheer habit, principally because the cinema is one form of entertainment which requires little effort on their part, but may be relied upon to shut out drab reality for an evening.

Is the cinema content to be regarded as an opiate to an already bored population so long as box office receipts are satisfactory? Or does it feel that being, as it is widely acknowledged, a most pleasant form of diversion, it might use its undoubted attraction to broaden and enrich the outlook and the lives of its patrons? It has a golden opportunity for so doing. There is no reason why the education of the public should be confined to educating the children at their special matinees, nor is it necessary to revise the entire policy of the film industry which is, I take it, to give the public what it wants.

Only short documentary films are needed to remind John Citizen of the ever watchful care exercised by the local authority on his behalf.

Local government is a very interesting human story, beginning even before the birth of every new citizen, present when he first sees the light of day, and ready to put on his first nappie! It watches over his health in the first anxious weeks and then, reassured, follows him to the day nursery, sits with him in the park, provides him with babyhood amusements, and receives him with due pride into school. Local government shares with the parents the duty of instilling into the future citizen the virtues of decency and uprightness, teaches him his limitations as well as his rights, and having fitted him for life, helps him to decide on his future career. The libraries are available for his use for pleasure and instruction. The parks and swimming baths and sports facilities are always there for his recreation, and when boy meets girl, there's a friendly tree upon which to carve two hearts and an arrow.

For the responsibilities of manhood and housewifery, the background services are always at work. The services providing for the general safety and health of the people, clean food, fair measure and good weight, are ensured. The streets are kept clean and dry, refuse is taken away. Sanitary inspectors are always on call. Perhaps John Citizen takes an allotment. In case

of accidents, there is an ambulance service. In any distress, physical, mental or financial, local government is there offering the helping hand, the hand of the community, held out to any of its members.

It is surely a worthy motive; this renaissance of the sense of citizenship, which can only be brought about by showing the work of the Town Hall in a human and interesting way. Most people are concerned only with matters which affect their own lives. Local government embraces all, and its impact is everywhere apparent—so very apparent that it remains unheeded. The streets we walk on, the schools our children attend, sometimes the house we live in (or would like to live in), the open spaces we frequent at times; all are provided by the local authority.

The cinema should do all it can to press this fact home to the mass of uninterested citizens, for until the general public take more interest in local affairs, we shall continue to fall short of full democratic representation.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN C. SUTCLIFFE
Public Relations OfficerTown Clerk's Department,
Town Hall, Ealing, W5.INFORMATIONAL
FILM YEAR BOOK

An essential handbook for everyone interested in the non-theatrical film. Contributors include: John Grierson, Paul Rotha, Basil Wright, Andrew Buchanan, Oliver Bell, J. B. Frizell, Forsyth Hardy, Norman Wilson, etc. There is a Buyer's Guide to Apparatus and full lists of makers, producers, libraries, organizations, etc., with full details of the year's documentary films. Illustrated, 10s. 6d. net. By post 11s.

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A survey of recent documentary production by leading writers of the movement and a record of the first International Festival of Documentary Films, Edinburgh, September, 1947. Copiously illustrated. 2s. 6d. By post 2s. 9d.

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NEW BOOKS ON FILM

Penguin Film Review No. 2. Penguin Books. 1s.

The second edition of the *Penguin Film Review* amply fulfils the promise of the first. Without being esoteric, it manages to deal in a serious style with many important aspects of the cinema both in this country and abroad, and it is gratifying to anyone interested in the progress of the film that there seems to be a wide public for intelligent criticism and analysis of the kind found in its pages. Those who are primarily concerned with the documentary aspect of the cinema will find much food for thought in the article by Basil Wright on 'Documentary Today'. 'Confusion of public thought', says Mr Wright, 'as to what a documentary film is doesn't matter much'. He goes on, 'if it is agreed that a definition of the documentary film is no longer really necessary, it becomes quite plain that documentary is not this or that type of film, but simply a *method of approach to public information*'. (His italics.) It includes 'all known media of information, particularly films, film-strips, slides, radio, television, stills and illustrations of all sorts, the Press (daily, weekly and periodical in general), diagrams, wall-newspapers, pamphlets, books, lectures and exhibitions'. Other articles include a fascinating account by Thorold Dickinson of the painstaking search which he undertook to ensure authenticity in the African music for his film *Men of Two Worlds*, an informative description of the Moscow Script Studio screenwriting by Catherine de la Roche, the first part of a survey by Ragna Jackson, of the Scandinavian film, and a number of interesting statistics collected by H. H. Wollenberg.

Informational Film Year Book, 1947. The Albyn Press, Edinburgh, 2. 10s. 6d.

If you want to know anything about anything in the documentary film world, how do you find out? You ask your friends, you write letters, you read magazines and you still can't find out what you want to know—up to now that has been the position. At last the Albyn Press has come to the rescue with their Informational Film Year Book—the first of an annual series. Let all those in or around the documentary film world stand up, take off their hats and pass a vote of thanks.

Here is a well-laid out objective source of information. Admittedly, it may not be completely comprehensive but it takes many, many steps in the right direction. The first half contains articles by such documentary figures as Grierson, Rotha, Wright and Forsyth Hardy and also chapters on the film in Scotland and Ireland. It is worth reading and most interesting to amateur and professional.

The second half has a Buyers' Guide and lists of Organizations, Film Societies, Production Units, Studios, Libraries, Publications, etc. There is a list of the documentaries made in the past year and some stills from these films.

Buy this book and keep it carefully hidden—otherwise it will vanish.

The World is My Cinema. E. W. and M. M. Robson. (Sidneyan Society.) 12s. 6d.

In 205 foam-flecked pages the authors put forward an almost unimaginably preposterous analysis of the cinema today. Their argument, as far as it is possible to disentangle it from the shock-headed language and spaghetti-snarled thought in which it is presented, seems to go something like this—if you can believe it. British films are no good; worse, they are a sinister, malign menace to our national purity, foully intended by their makers, who have 'a Sadist-Fascist mental complex', to lure us all to Nazism and war. There is only one way out. We must insist that they shall be made according to the Christian ethic as set out in the Hays Code, which the authors compare with the Sermon on the Mount. It is because most American pictures have in the past conformed to this high moral standard that they have been so successful at the democratic polling-booth of the box-office, American pictures do not, we are given to understand, treat low, disgusting, unpleasant subjects with the bad taste shown in *Champagne Charlie* which is all about drink; are not obscene like *Uncensored* which contains two references to 'behinds'; do not lower the sanctity of marriage and the home as Anthony Asquith did in *Fanny by Gaslight*; are not disrespectful to the flag like *The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp*; do not hold religion up to ridicule as was so shamefully done in *Henry V*. The 'Sadists and Schizophrenics, pathological murderers and other subconscious disease mindedness' which besmirch the British screen find devilish advocacy in the writings of critics like Lejeune and Powell, with their liking for the depraved Continental cinema, and originate partly in the gospel of sexual promiscuity preached by Engels in *The Origin of the Family*, and partly in the depraved philosophy of 'the aesthetes, the hedonists, the cynics and the vocal sadists deriving from the French and German schools' who apparently include Shaw, Wilde, Swinburne, James Joyce and O'Shaughnessy.

Well, that's the gist of it. It will cost you twelve-and-sixpence if you want it. Or you can go to Hyde Park and hear the same sort of thing free, and get some fresh air at the same time.

British Film Music: John Huntley. (Skelton Robinson.) 17s. 6d.

Mr Huntley's survey of the music of the British cinema might be readily sub-divided into three sections. We have articles on most aspects of the field by Huntley himself—surely Muir Mathieson's most faithful and devoted satellite; we have some contributions by men prominent in the art of film music; and we have a biographical and index section of great value. Mr Huntley describes his work as not a discussion of theory but a statement of the facts. Perhaps it is a pity that a little more care was not taken in his collection of these facts. It might be said that in a book containing such a wealth of

information some errors were bound to creep in. Still, in a volume in which the greatest value lies in the references as to who did what and when, such mistakes are small but important. For instance, the GPO Film Unit did not become the Crown Film Unit in 1939; *Stricken Peninsula* could scarcely be described as a production of the Army Film Unit, and Kenneth Pakeman did not compose the music for *October Man*. This last is rather a bloomer coming as it does from one who attended a lot of the recording of Alwyn's music. Somehow one gets the impression that the book would have been much better—and certainly much more accurate—had more time been devoted to proof correction. There is something of the atmosphere of a work rushed into press that is unfortunate in a reference work on so important a subject. If it comes to that Mr Huntley's description of the process of recording sound on film has a colourful naïveté which would look better if technicalities had not been cast entirely away. Nevertheless, the book contains a vast amount of valuable information. The research involved must have been prodigious. It is fair and anything but patronizing to the documentary movement—and who are we not to be grateful for small mercies? If 17s. 6d. is a lot of money for a slim volume, well, we have some very chaste illustrations and a description of a music session by one of the orchestra which is pure joy.

WORLD UNION OF DOCUMENTARY

ON June 8th and 9th, 1947, a meeting of individual members of the documentary film movement took place in Brussels.

Australia, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, France, Holland, Yugoslavia, Poland, United Kingdom, USA and S. Africa were represented.

After an exchange of views and information it was agreed to form a *World Union of Documentary*.

A resolution, addressed to all workers, stressed the indispensable role which documentary has to play in the post-war world. The preamble said that documentary had not only to state all the problems but also to guide the peoples towards the solution of these problems. Work must be done which would secure the full expression of social, economic and cultural life through the medium of film. The resolution ended:

'The principal tasks confronting documentary workers are as follows:

The fight against the enemies of peace and democracy; national, racial and economic oppression and religious intolerance; poverty and disease, illiteracy, ignorance and other social evils.

And the fight for peace and reconstruction; independence of subject peoples; free intellectual and cultural expression; dissemination of knowledge, not at present available to all.

Documentary film workers will collaborate with all international organizations working for the principles enumerated above.'

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A cultural Quarterly

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appraising educational
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with understanding;
hearing with reason;’ (SCHOPENHAUER)

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